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POCKET NOVELS



The Squaw Spy. 97



THE SQUAW SPY;

OR,

THE RANGERS OF THE LAVA-BEDS.

BY CAPT. CHAS HOWARD,

AUTHOR OF THE FOLLOWING POCKET NOVELS.

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 45. THE ELK KING. | 69. THE YELLOW HUNTER. |
| 50. THE WOLF QUEEN. | 72. SILVER RIFLE. |
| 52. THE MAD CHIEF. | 82. KENTON, THE RANGER. |
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THE SQUAW SPY;

OR,

THE RANGERS OF THE LAVA-BEDS.

CHAPTER I

LAVA-BED KIT.

"WHERE'S McKay?"

"Still absent with his Warm Springers. I do not expect him before midnight."

"And Artena?"

"Dead or alive, she is somewhere among the Indians. She promised to be here against sunset, and see, that hour is with us now."

The first speaker glanced toward the west, and remained silent for a minute.

The handsome military man at his side quietly adjusted his field-glass, which he brought to bear upon a dark ridge against the horizon.

"General, this has been a bloody day," said the rough borderman, venturing to disturb the officer in the midst of his observations. "We've lost as good boys as ever lived."

Down came the field-glass, and General Gillem sighed as he turned to his companion.

"A disastrous day for us truly, Kit," he said. "No nobler fellows than Thomas, Howe and Wright. Now shall the war be pushed with vigor. This day's massacre has heated my blood till it tingles through my veins. The fiends expect no quarter, as none they give. By Heavens, none they shall have! If we could but get the master-spirit of this war—the Napoleon of these red Arabs."

"Captain Jack, General?"

"Captain Jack or Mouseh, as his people call him. I want

to see the murderer of Canby swing. But, why does not Artena come?"

"Perhaps she has got in trouble," said the Oregonian. "If so—there! somebody is coming now."

General Gillem raised his field-glass, but could distinguish nothing, for the shadows of night were gathering and the smoke of savage fires hung heavily over the ground where so many brave soldiers had lately fallen before three score of Modoc rifles.

"I heard hoofs," said the ranger. 'Tis Artena at last, General."

As he uttered the last words, the dark figure of a horse came in view and presently the animal halted before the twain.

Gillem started forward.

"Artena!" he cried, recognizing the womanish figure seated on the Indian saddle.

"White war-man good; he wait for Artena," said the woman. "But who with him?"

"Kit, Artena," said the ranger quickly, starting forward. "I've been here since the bloody fight of this morning."

Artena bent forward eagerly.

"Kit in fight?" she asked anxiously.

"Yes; Kit South never throws away a chance to draw trigger on a Modoc."

"Did Kit see Indian with cavalry hat on?" asked the squaw. "He have white feather in cap."

"I think I did get a glimpse of such a devil," answered the Oregonian. "In fact, I know I did, girl—but why do you ask?"

"That Indian Baltimore Bob."

Kit South started.

"Talk to the General now, Artena," he said, a moment later. "Tell him the news, and when you have done, I want a few words with you."

Then Gillem put numerous questions to the Modoc girl, from whom he learned much concerning the present whereabouts of the Modoc chief, and something about his plans for future operations.

It was the night of the 26th April 1873—a day long to be remembered in the annals of Indian warfare.

For upon the morning of that eventful day, a reconnoitering party under command of the gallant Captain Evan Thomas, of Battery H, Fourth Artillery, left General Gillem's camp and proceeded in the direction of the Modoc stronghold. The little command reached the foot of the high bluffs south of the lava-bed stronghold without molestation, and were preparing to feel their way further, when the Modocs opened upon them a severe fire under cover of the basaltic rocks.

The history of that brief and bloody engagement is too well known to be recounted here.

Armed with Spencer carbines and breech-loading muskets, and sheltered by the rocks, the red rebels dropped such men as Thomas, Howe, and Wright, and, in the end, inflicted a signal defeat upon the troops.

Donald McKay and his Warm Spring Indians, of whom much hereafter, participated in the engagement; but remained among the rocks hunting, at the same time, for additional scalps and information.

"Artena," said Gillem, after conversing some time with the spy, "I trust that you will not run your head into danger. We can not afford to lose you."

"Artena watch out," said the girl, with a smile. "She no fool squaw. Modocs no think she look for white warman. She tell Jack all 'bout soldiers," and there was a merry twinkle in the black eyes that looked down upon the bearded son of Mars.

"Now, Kit, you may talk to Artena," said the soldier. "But do not keep her here too long, as no doubt she is hungry; so, when you are through, bring her to my quarters."

"Artena no hungry," cried the girl quickly. "Mebbe she and Kit go off to-night, again."

"If so, for Heaven's sake be careful, Kit South; we truly need such men as you now. If you do go out to-night, and should encounter McKay, deliver this message."

As Gillem was speaking his hand traced a few words on a blank memorandum leaf, which he handed to the scout.

A moment later Artena and the stalwart Oregonian were alone.

"Do you think we will succeed to-night?" asked the mountaineer, eagerly.

"Yes."

"I thought so when you looked at me not long ago. I could hardly smother my hopes when the General and I were waiting for you. I wanted to tell him that Captain Jack would be in camp to-morrow."

"He will be there!" said the squaw spy confidently.

"It'll be the biggest kidnapping on record," said South. "If we get Jack, then the war won't last long. Artena, are you sure that the Modocs do not suspect you?"

"Is not Artena a Modoc?"

"Yes, but—"

"But what, Kit?"

"The rebels are shrewd fellows. I knew them long before the war. They may be playing with you."

"They play with fire, then," said the girl. "What news in camp?"

"The men are mad enough to eat every Modoc in the Lava-Beds. Three new fellows from Klamath came in just before Gillem and I came out here to meet you."

Artena started and caught Kit's arm.

"What they look like?" she asked.

"Like rough fellows, as they undoubtedly are."

"One tall?"

"They were all tall men."

"One young?"

"Yes, younger than the other two."

"He spy?"

"A spy?" cried Kit South. "A white man has more sense than to spy about a camp that holds Donald McKay and Kit South."

"Anyhow, he spy," reiterated Artena. "Artena heard Jack say that young white man sleep in Gillem's camp to-night, and that he would soon know what soldiers going to do."

"Then I don't go till he's caught," said the scout. "Come, Artena, we'll go and put Gillem on his guard. Plenty of time for the other thing, you know."

The girl assented, and the twain deserted the spot, and moved toward the camp.

If the young man referred to was a spy in the interest of Captain Jack, his end was near at hand, for Gillem would treat him to a rope immediately after his capture.

The twain had not proceeded a dozen paces toward the camp when the figure of a man rose from behind a great rock near the spot where they had conversed.

He was clad in the well-known garb of the Oregonian, and rested a long rifle on the stone as he gained his feet.

"So you're going to tell Gillem about the spy, eh?" he ejaculated in a sneering tone, looking after the couple. "But they've got to catch a man before they hang him, and Gillem won't do neither, I'm thinking. Chris South, how I'd like to put a bullet in your back. I could get away after doing it now," and the gun was lifted from the stone. "There's an old grudge between us, but I'll not settle it now. No, I want to tell you something before I take your worthless life, which will not be long."

Then, after a pause :

"I wish I had been rearer them. I missed a good many words, but caught enough to know that Artena and the old scout has some deviltry afoot, and if that gal pokes her head into Jack's camp ag'in, she'll never get to pull it out any more."

Then he picked up the rifle and moved away at a rapid pace toward the spot where the Indians were holding hellish carnival over their bloody victory of the past day.

Half an hour later Kit South and Artena returned to the conference knoll—both well-mounted.

The camp had been thoroughly searched, but no spy was found.

The two frontiersmen who had accompanied the missing man to camp, declared that they had noted nothing suspicious about him ; but General Gillem was satisfied that he was a spy.

"Now for the kidnapping of Jack," said Kit, with an air of triumph, as they moved in a westerly direction. "If he proves too much for us, Artena, do you know what's to be done?"

The girl nodded, and laid her hand on the scout's revolver.

"Yes, that's it," said South, and in the faint starlight he examined the chambers of the deadly weapon.

"I do wonder how the folks are to home?" he said in a tone scarcely above a whisper. "I haven't heard a bit of news from the hut on Lost River for three weeks. I hope God will keep the old woman and 'Reesa safe, while I'm fighting the Modocs."

"What that Kit say 'bout Lost River?"

It was Artena's voice, and it startled the scout.

"I war talking about the folks up there."

"Kit got girl there?"

"Yes."

"Girl with blue eyes?"

"Yes! Artena, for Heaven's sake, what are you driving at?"

"Young bucks come to Mouseh yesterday with captives from Lost River."

The scout instantly stopped the squaw spy's horse, and whirled her about in the saddle until he could look squarely into her eyes.

"My God! has the tomahawk been at work in Oregon?" he exclaimed, in an undertone. "Artena, is there a girl in Jack's stronghold with blue eyes?"

"Yes, Kit."

"Did you talk with her?"

"Yes."

"What did she say?"

"She say her father with war-man Canby. She no know Canby dead."

"Great Heaven!" groaned Kit South; "it is my 'Reesa! Artena, where was her mother?"

"The young bucks killed her!"

The scout's head dropped upon his broad breast, and for several minutes the horses moved on in silence.

"Artena?"

The girl spy looked up.

"Who led the young bucks?"

"Couldn't Kit guess?"

"I can now, Artena. Baltimore Bob, you shall pay for your crowning act of villainy. Girl, 'Reesa's got to leave the Lava-Beds."

"Yes, but we must catch Jack first. The scout has sworn to help Artena."

"I'm not going back on my word. We'll kidnap the Modoc Tecumseh to-night, and then I'll get 'Reesa back, and settle accounts with the veriest red devil this side o' the Rockies?"

As brave and as cunning as old Kit South was he was loomed to discover the truth of the ancient adage -- "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

CHAPTER II.

JACK AND HIS CAPTIVES.

WHILE the foregoing scenes were transpiring on the edge of our camp, other events of importance to our romance occupied the Lava-Beds, and their immediate vicinity—events destined to introduce the reader to characters who have lately carved their names on history's tablets with the tomahawk and scalping-knife.

About a fire that blazed in the center of a large cave, stood and reclined, perhaps twenty-five Indians. With several exceptions all were chiefs, and those exceptions were squaws. The men were clothed in the noble army blue, wearing cavalry hats, sabers and regulation sashes. The clothes of some of our fallen braves fitted the Indians to a nicety, and they laughed to themselves when they surveyed the garments, and thought of the massacre which their red hands had lately inflicted.

Conspicuous among the Modocs stood a tall fellow, about forty years of age. His hair was slightly tinged with gray, and there were crow's-feet on his forehead, which seldom come to a savage of his years. He wore the fringy leggings of the western tribes; but his body was robed in a close-fitting regulation coat buttoned tightly over his chest, and upon the blue shoulders glittered two gold stars—a General's insignia. His head was surmounted by a military hat, and his

waist was encircled by a beautiful sword sash, from which hung a sword indicative of rank.

This man, in short, was the redoubtable Captain Jack, and the uniform he wore had once graced the manly form of a lamented warrior—General Edward Canby.

Ever and anon shouts of Indian triumph entered the cave, and caused Mouseh's companions to exchange pleasing glances ; but the Modoc tiger did not deign a smile ; he stood erect with brows knit, and lips glued together, as it were, by the icy glue of death.

All at once he became a living thing, for he had grown into a statue, as a young savage, clad in the full uniform of a United States artillery-man, entered the cave.

He seemed to be the person for whose arrival Jack had been watching.

"What news, Tom?" asked the chief starting forward, and as the sound of his voice, melodious for a man of his years, fell upon the ears of his co-rebels, there was a movement about the fire, and all started to their feet.

"McKay and his red foxes are near," said the young Indian. "They crawl among the rocks like lizards, and we can not hear them."

"Can you not *see* them?"

"Now and then," answered Shack Nasty Tom. "Tom saw one ; he waited and struck ; see !"

As he spoke he drew a scalp from his bosom, and flung it across the Modoc's arm.

The other chiefs crowded about the trophy.

"'Tis not McKay," said Captain Jack, in a disappointed tone, "but one of his accursed rangers is scalpless, thanks to Tom. Chiefs, here is a right arm that is dear to Mouseh," and turning abruptly to the red faces that appeared at his right, the Modoc terror stretched forth his muscled arm.

"Dear says Mouseh is this arm to him ; but he will give it for the scalp of Donald McKay."

"And here is an arm for the hair of the Lost River hunter," and a tawny arm, upon which the muscles stood out like ropes, was thrown across Jack's.

The last speaker was Boston Charley.

The next moment a wild shriek rung throughout the cav-

ern, and a young girl, clad in civilized habiliments, darted from a gloomy corner of the cave, and threw herself among the scarlet rebels.

"He is my father!" she cried, fastening her eyes upon the last red speaker. "You shall not take his life. Already, fiends, you have slain my mother, and if you dare to take the scalp of the only relative I now possess, I'll drive the knife and bullet to more than one red heart."

The Indians stood speechless while she spoke, and when she had finished, Boston Charley darted upon her with the hoarse growl of the disturbed jungle tiger.

A moment later and the young girl might have been brain-ed, had not Jack caught the uplifted arm, and clutched a hatchet with a determination not to be disobeyed.

"She is Baltimore Bob's," he said, looking squarely into Charley's maddened eye. "He has a claim upon the girl which we must not meddle with. We strike the blue-coats who carry guns and swords—not women who wear long hair."

Cowed by his chieftain's eye and the menacing hatchet, Charley dropped the arm he had taken, and the beautiful captive staggered from the group.

"Oh, heavens! have I fallen to the lot of Baltimore Bob?" she cried, sinking back upon the heap of sage-bush, which she had lately deserted. "I have thought, for years, that he was dead; but now to fall into his power again. Oh, heaven protect me."

"We leave this cave to-night," said the Modoc chief, addressing his men. "Four miles south of here we find new quarters, from which the blue-coats shall never drive us. Ah, the insults of twenty years ago are being wiped out in blood! Jack treads the path of vengeance now, nor will he relinquish the rifle, until the spirits of his murdered people cry from the spirit-land, 'Enough!'"

As he uttered the last words, a young chief named Badger Dick stepped before him, for some purpose which must rest forever unexplained, and a second later reeled from the spot with a bullet in his brain.

Instantly every chief cocked his rifle, and stared into the gloom from whence the shot had proceeded.

That the bullet was intended for Jack's brain was patent to all, but Dick's action had preserved the red desperado's life for the scaffold.

The savages drew back from the fire, and a moment later Jack was sneaking toward the hidden enemy.

The formation of the Lava-Beds admitted of a thousand and one admirable concealments for a foe, and every cave could boast of a score of narrow, rocky corridors, many of which would not admit of the passage of a fox. Through one of the latter the bullet had found its way to the brain of Badger Dick, and Jack soon gave over the search, and turned into a larger corridor. This led him into the air, and, looking up, he saw the stars that looked down upon settlers abandoning their homes, all for fear of the knives that he and his merciless followers were wielding so fatally.

The fatal shot had been fired by one of McKay's Indians, perhaps by the giant half-breed himself, and the Modoc chief was bent upon finding the slayer.

The Rangers of the Lava-Beds, a title which had been gained by McKay's band of Warm Spring Indians, were scattered about the basaltic rocks, watching the movements of the Modocs, and equally eager to shoot as to spy. They had proved of much annoyance to Jack during the war, for they were versed in savage warfare, and Donald McKay could pelt cunning against cunning, with a readiness that irritated the conspirators.

About Mouseh all was still.

He lay among the rocks listening intently, and watching for shadows against their whitish sides.

For several moments he had been debating whether to proceed further, and was on the point of deciding to return to his chiefs, when a slight noise attracted his attention.

With his finger on the trigger of a new Spencer rifle, he turned his head, when a dark form leaped over the flat rock upon which the red brigand's arm rested, and he went to the ground beneath the onslaught.

A glance would have told the spectator that the new foe could not cope with the Modoc tiger, and that he could hope for victory only in agility, and quick, sure blows.

But these the latter seemed unwilling to bestow; for

he beat the Indian's head against the rocks until he deprived him of his senses.

"Now," the victor muttered, triumphantly. "I've caught the biggest devil of them all; but I'm somewhat like the man who drew the elephant—I don't know what to do with him. Shall I kill him? No; he must die by other hands than mine. But how can I get him away from here?"

Thus commenting, the youth, a white man, though clad in Indian garments—proceeded to bind his "elephant," whom he had recognized by the two gold stars on the shoulder and was midway in his task when a low "call," ten feet below and slightly to his right, caused him to pause.

With his hands on the cords he listened, and at last answered the call.

Then he saw a dark figure approach with the movements of a lazy lizard; but the youth drew his knife through fear.

"Cohoon," he ventured, at length, in a cautious tone.

"Evan," replied the figure, and a moment later the captor of Captain Jack had a valuable assistant in the person of a Warm Spring Indian, who is destined to play no inferior part in the intricacies of our romance.

"Jack?" exclaimed the Warm Spring scout, gazing down into the captive's face.

"Yes, Cohoon; I did not dream of catching this devil tonight. Where's Donald?"

"Down by Black Creek."

"Any of the boys near?"

"All away."

"Then we must take care of the elephant ourselves. Here, tie these legs while I press them together. Draw the rope between them, that's it. Heavens!"

Well might he utter this ejaculation, for Captain Jack, in one second, had drawn his legs to his chin, and as suddenly had straightened them out again.

Cohoon, struck in the breast by the moccasined feet, went flying over the rocks, and the youth threw himself upon the Modoc again before he could gain his feet.

"I'll finish you now, devil!" he cried, and the knife shot aloft. "Curse you, Captain Jack—"

The Modoc rose to his feet as though there was no impediment.

ment to such action, and the next minute the youth found himself held at arm's length by the chief of the scarlet rebels.

Captain Jack had not spoken once during the melee, nor did he speak now.

He seemed at a loss how to dispose of his captive.

He could drive the knife to his heart, or hurl him over the cordon of rock that surrounded the mouth of the corridor, and the soldiers would pick him up some time, a shapeless mass of humanity!

A footstep attracted the Indian. Was Cohoon returning?

Jack thought he was; so, raising the young white scout above his head, he stepped upon a rock that elevated him several feet, and bent his body for the death-throw.

But at that moment the figure which had occasioned the noise sprung forward, and caught the chief's arm.

With a low cry of astonishment the Modoc left the rock, and lowered the scout.

"Spare him for me, Mousch," said the new-comer, who was clad in the rough garments of the frontiersman. "I've got a score to settle with this chap. Look here, Evan Harris, do you know me?"

As he put the question, he whirled Jack's captive about, and leaned forward until their faces almost touched.

The scout gazed into the triumphant eyes for a moment, and then started back.

"Great Heavens! is it you?" he cried. "I thought you were dead!"

The new-comer laughed.

"Were I dead, I would surely not be here," he said. "Evan Harris, I would not have missed this meeting for all the gold in California. I believe there's a slight difficulty existing between us. We'll settle it to-night, yet. Now, Mousch we'll go to the braves."

Captain Jack picked the scout up again, and bore him into the corridor.

It was midnight now.

After a while the Modoc again strode into the cave with his captive, but the borderman did not follow.

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His disappearance puzzled the scout, nor did he come while they waited, seemingly, for him.

All at once a woman glided into the cave, and as she rose erect in the firelight, the chiefs uttered a name:

"Artena!"

She started slightly when her eyes fell upon the captive scout; but recovered a moment later, and advanced toward the group.

"What news does Artena bring from the lodges of the blue-coats?" asked Jack. "She did not stay long with them, so she must have seen something important."

"She has; the soldier with the big beard—"

Her sentence was broken by the sudden appearance of an Indian, whose voice filled the cavern.

"Arrest Artena," he cried. "She is a snake in the grass—a traitress of the deepest dye!"

The denouncer stood in the center of the cave, and pointed a quivering finger at the Indian girl.

She did not stir, but looked the Indian squarely in the eye, as her lips shot in his face these words:

"Baltimore Bob is a liar!"

CHAPTER III.

"GIVE ME 'REESA!"

"SOMETHING must have happened to the girl. She was to have been here in one hour, and here I have waited two. It's after midnight now. I'll wait another ten minutes, and then I'll go and see what's up."

The low sounds proceeded from a dark spot near three hundred yards from the mouth of the cave wherein we have just introduced the renowned Captain Jack to the reader, and the voice was that of Kit South.

Undiscovered, they had found their way—the scout and Artena—to the spot occupied by the former, and the girl spy had boldly proceeded to the lair of the Modoc tiger, for the

purpose of luring him thence, that he might be kidnapped after the daring plan they had formed.

Artena, as the reader has heard her aver, was a Modoc.

Prior to the commencement of hostilities between the Indians and the Government, she was unknown to the blue-coated defenders of the latter; but when Donald McKay offered our General the services of his Warm Spring Indians, she came forth, and offered herself as a spy.

Her tribal relations to the Modoc chief was a poor recommendation in the eyes of Canby; but, upon the earnest solicitation of Coboon, the Warm Spring scout, seconded by McKay, she was installed in the dangerous office of spy, and at once became of great value to the troops.

She persisted in calling herself a Warm Spring Indian, when all knew, from her features, that she was a full-blooded Modoc.

For weeks she had played a dangerous double role. Leaving Jack's camp at the dead of night for the purpose, as she would tell that worthy, of gaining information concerning the movements of the army, she would find her way to Canby or Gillem's head-quarters, and open her budget of news about the designs of the Modoc rebel.

It was Artena who proposed the kidnapping of Captain Jack, and this bold movement found a response in the breast of Kit South, who believed that, deprived of their chieftain, the Modocs would not hold out longer.

After a lapse of ten minutes, the scout rose to his feet and glided toward the cave, with whose labyrinths he had been familiar for years.

Artena's protracted absence boded ill for her safety, and the giant scout proceeded with caution.

"The devils have caught 'Reesa and killed the old woman!" he grated, through clenched teeth, as he crawled over the lava rocks. "I never thought they would strike so high as Lost River; but there's no telling how far a Modoc will go for a scalp. I'd like to get 'Reesa from 'em to-night, but guess I can't. So—hello! here's a hole! Wonder where it leads to?"

The scout had paused at the mouth of a dark corridor which led, seemingly, far into the bowels of the earth.

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pped "Now let me study a minute," he murmured. "There's a black hole hyarabouts that leads over the cave where I s'pect Jack is. I've crawled it afore, and I ought to tell now whether In- this is the one or not."

ne- Then, for several moments, he busied himself with examining the rocks at the mouth of the corridor, when, satisfied that of- he was on the right trail, he drew his hunting-knife and advanced.

n- He had gained the inner portal of the black passage, when he became aware that he was followed.

ci- Instantly he paused and listened.

y, [Sure enough, an Indian was creeping after him.

ce "Curse your red skin," he hissed, hugging the black wall, as, knife in hand, he awaited the foe. "I'll settle your hash. A little further, my boy; a little further, if you please."

l Nearer and nearer came the Indian, in the Cimmerian gloom, and all at once the scout's left hand shot outward, and luckily gripped a crimson throat.

But a second later he relaxed the grasp, and whispered a name.

"Cohoon?"

"Kit," came the reply.

"I knew ye by yer necklace of bear-claws, boy," continued Kit, in a low tone. "By George! if it hadn't been fur them, there'd be a dead Indian hereabouts. Where've ye been, Cohoon?"

"Spying all 'bout," answered the savage. "Evan and Cohoon catch Mouseh; but he git 'way. He kick Cohoon 'way down over rocks, and Indian lay there long time."

Kit South uttered an ejaculation more forcible than polite.

"Where's Evan now?"

"That's what Cohoon want to know."

"You leave him with Jack?"

"Yes."

"Been back to the place, eh?"

"Yes."

"Any blood there?"

"No blood."

"Funny, deuced funny," said Kit, musingly. "I guess

Jack got the best of him. Artena's got into a fix also, I opine."

Cohoon started violently, and in the darkness griped the scout's knife arm.

"Modoc call Artena spy?" he asked.

"Don't know; fear so," and then in a low tone Kit narrated the kidnapping plot.

"Mouseh keep Artena for something," said Cohoon, who appeared to take a great deal of interest in the squaw spy. "Was Kit going to hunt her?"

"Yes."

"Then come. This black place look down into Mouseh's cave, by 'm by."

The route over which white and red crawled was fraught with dangers, for the subterranean portion of the Lava-Beds is honeycombed, and at any moment they were liable to be precipitated into some dark place from which escape might be impossible.

"I guess nobody will 'sturb our hosses," said the scout. "We left them down by the Black Creek—that is, above the stream, on the bank."

"Modocs all in caves," said Cohoon. "If Warm Spring Indians find 'em, let 'em be, for they know who left 'em there."

"But then— Hold, Cohoon, yonder's a light, as I live."

They came to an abrupt halt, and caught the glimmer of light far ahead.

"I can't hear a word," whispered the scout, after listening awhile. "Every thing's as still as death. Mebbe the red devils hev left?"

Cohoon shook his head.

"Mouseh still in cave," he said. "Crawl on, Kit."

The scout moved forward again, and at length looked down into the Modocs' cave.

"Now you red devil-slayer of the best General that ever drew a sword," hissed the scout, forgetting, for a moment, his present position, errand, peril—every thing.

Captain Jack stood before him!

"I'll end the Modoc war now. If we can't kidnap you, by George, we can—"

He had thrust the muzzle of his Spencer through a perforation, and his eye dropped to the sights, when Cohoon's hand covered the lock.

Kit drew back and looked at the Indian, who did not speak, but shook his head with a faint smile.

The light of the fire penetrating the chamber above the cave, fell upon the faces of the twain, and also upon their surroundings. Slowly Kit dropped the lock, and threw a look of thanks into Cohoon's face.

Captain Jack was not alone.

Several other Indians occupied the cave. Where were Artena and Evan Harris? They were not to be seen.

Where, too, was 'Reesa South—the scout's daughter?

It seemed that the Modocs were evacuating the present cave, as Gillem thought they would proceed to do, and that Jack and a few of his trustiest men, were the last to leave the stronghold. The two friends above kept their eyes fastened upon the red rebel, and his chiefs.

"If Artena is a spy, she shall die," said Jack. "But Mousch can not believe all that Baltimore Bob says. Artena has told him much about the blue-coats; he must have more proof of her treason than Bob's voice. What say the chiefs?"

"I believe Baltimore Bob," said one. "He must know. We have heard where he has been. Boston Charley votes for death."

"And Hooker Jim?"

"Death to the traitress!"

Jack turned to the other chief—Scar-faced Charley.

There was a slight gleam of hope in his face. He hoped that the last chief would not pronounce for death.

Mechanically Jack turned and struck the lava wall twice with his hatchet.

The tread of many feet followed, and presently a dozen Indians joined the chiefs.

Artena, pinioned by strong red arms, walked in the van of the party, and near her, with his hands fastened to his side, strode Evan Norris, the young ranger, whose prisoner the redoubtable Jack himself had lately been.

The savage known as Baltimore Bob headed the band, and

fastened his eyes upon the Modoc chief as he stepped into the light of the fire.

Jack's gaze fell to the ground.

"Ask the chiefs," he said, in a low tone. "Mouseh's heart is sad."

Bob turned to the trio of Indians, and his look was answered.

"Artena must die," said Hooker Jim.

"When?"

"Now!"

"And this young white cur?"

"Is not worth talking about. Of course he dies with Artena."

"Yes, he dies," said Jack, starting up as if from a prolonged sleep. "Chiefs, do it quickly; then hasten to the deep cave. We must fight the blue-coats to-morrow. Do not torture Artena; but do as you wish with the white man. After all is over, lay her on the water that rushes under the ground."

The chieftain glanced at the Squaw Spy and then stepped away.

The eye of Kit South followed him, and again the hammer of his trusty gun was gently pulled back.

"It may be my last chance," he murmured, and the butt of the weapon struck his shoulder.

Cohoon did not see the movement; his fiery eye was regarding the scenes below.

All at once Captain Jack stooped, and Kit South heard him say:

"Too much for White Rose to see. Mouseh take her away."

As he spoke, the Modoc lifted a girl from the semi-darkened portion of the cavern, and Kit lowered his gun, with a cry of surprise—a cry that startled the savages directly below them.

"'Reesa, by heavens!" he cried. "I never dreamed that that brown heap over yonder was my daughter. 'Reesa—Jack—Jack, drop my gal!"

Cohoon turned upon the scout with rising indignation, and reached forth to prevent the action which he saw was about to be performed.

But he was too late, for, rifle in hand, Kit South had leaped into the cave, and was bounding toward the Modoc chief!

"Give me 'Reesa!" he cried, and the next moment, before Captain Jack could comprehend the situation, the mad scout had snatched his child from his arms, and flung him to the ground!

Then the Indians who had started back when the scout suddenly dropped into their midst, recovered from their surprise, and rushed upon him.

"That's right! come on!" cried Kit, presenting a revolver, which he thrust into their very faces. "I like to shoot dogs, always did; and here's a chance perhaps to drop a dozen or so."

But the foremost savages had paused and were looking fearfully into the muzzle of the leveled weapon.

CHAPTER IV.

DISCOVERED.

HAD Kit South harbored one calm thought just before leaping down among the Modocs, he would have remained with Cohoon.

Certainly it was a jump into the jaws of death, and no doubt he realized this as he faced the Indians, with leveled pistol, and dared them to advance.

Once or twice he glanced hurriedly upward, as if invoking assistance from Cohoon; but the Warm Spring Indian did not show himself, and Kit began to curse him for his cowardice.

"I've got 'Reesa, and I'm going to keep her," he shouted, at the barbarians, "and, more'n that, I want out o' this place. Break ranks there, and let me through. Captain Jack, I cover your heart."

The Modoc chief upon recovering from the blow which the scout delivered when he tore his daughter from his arm, bounded to his red brethren, and was among the foremost

who faced the backwoods hero. Beyond the ranks of the savages stretched a dark corridor, which eventually, as Kit well knew, led to the top of the Lava-Beds. He had hunted the bear among these basaltic rocks, until he gained the sobriquet of Lava-Bed Kit.

"I'll end the Modoc war in just one minute," he continued, with stern resolution, still keeping his eye fastened upon the redoubtable Jack. "I mean business now. Let me pass your greasers."

Without a word, Mouseh stepped aside, and waved his hand to his braves as he executed the action.

Just then a low rumbling noise fell upon the ears of all, and a minute later an explosion followed.

The chiefs looked into each others' faces.

Gillen's mortars were shelling the Lava-Beds!

"Go, white scout," said Jack, eager to rid himself of the threatening pistol, and as eager to vacate the cave which might soon become untenable for them. "Take your pale girl; Mouseh did not intend to hurt her. He was just going to carry her away from the bloody work of the Modoc knife."

Obedient to their chief's command the Indians stepped aside, leaving an unobstructed path to the corridor.

Kit, with his precious burden, stepped forward.

He glanced pityingly at Evan Harris and Artena; but felt that he could not aid them.

He could save his daughter only, and she was dearer than all the world to him now—for he had no one else to love since the fiends had butchered his wife.

Despite the expression of pity, something very like a smile of triumph lurked about his lips, and he walked erect, keeping his revolver leveled at the breast of the Modoc rebel, who returned his look with silent promises of future vengeance.

Explosion followed explosion in rapid succession, and the scout accelerated his movements, for he feared that a shell might accidentally find its way into the cave, and work destruction among its inmates.

He faced the savages when he reached the end of the line, and began to "back" toward the corridor.

At the moment when the daring scout was about to cross

the threshold of the passage, a half-hissing, half-grating sound startled every one, and the next second a shell rolled into the cavern! A cry of horror burst simultaneously from a dozen throats, as several Indians sprung forward and seized the deadly missile.

A moment's scramble for the shell followed, when the most stalwart of the trio held it aloft, and began to strike it with his hatchet.

Kit seemed rooted to the spot; but only for a moment.

He sprung back into the corridor, as a pistol-shot reverberated throughout the cave.

In the semi-gloom of the passage a man staggered and groaned once—then sunk to the ground, and the figure of a woman fell with him!

It was Lava-Bed Kit, shot by Baltimore Bob, whose right hand gripped a smoking pistol!

A wild shout of approval greeted the treacherous shot, and the exultant Indian leaped toward his victim, hatchet in hand, when the most terrible of explosions shook the cave!

The Indians who stood around the shell reeled from the spot, and he whose hatchet had shivered the cap, was flung to the remotest end of the cave, headless and disemboweled.

The cavern, too, was wrapped in darkness, for a portion of the death-freighted missile had scattered the fire, and groans of pain and terror made the place a very Pandemonium.

But this did not last long.

Captain Jack and his principal chiefs luckily escaped injury, and soon a new fire revealed the work of destruction.

Four savages lay dead in the cave, and three others possessed wounds that would soon terminate their existence. The wonder was that the shell did not work greater destruction, and that none but warriors felt its effects.

Baltimore Bob, flung backward against the wall of the cavern, started forward again; but was arrested by a wild cry from Jack.

He turned.

"Where's Artena?" asked the Modoc chief, pointing to the spot occupied by the Squaw Spy a moment prior to the explosion.

Artena was missing!

Baltimore Bob looked about the cavern, then turned to his chief again.

"Artena's been blown to atoms," he said. "She stood there just a second before the noise."

Before Jack could reply, another shell dropped into the cavern, and the savages shrunk toward the corridors.

"We must leave this hole, said Jack. "Blue-coats' big balls got sharp eyes. They see Modoc here."

The Indians were not averse to leaving.

Theresa, the scout's daughter, lay across her father's body, stunned by the explosion, and Bob snatched her away as he turned to his clansmen again.

"We must go, and that quickly," he said, in hurried accents. "Charley, pick up yon white dog—quick!"

The Indian addressed—Boston Charley—sprung forward, and lifted the limp form of Evan Harris from the spot to which he had been hurled by the bursting of the shell.

"No use, he's dead," he said, glancing from the bloody face to Bob.

"Dead! No, he shan't be dead!" cried the mad chief. "I've got an old score to wipe out with him yet. Dead? no! see, he gasps. Evan Harris, I'm going to have the satisfaction of killing you before I die."

Sure enough, the young ranger gasped, and opened his eyes convulsively.

His face was covered with blood, and it was difficult to tell the position of his wound. That the exploding shell had injured him was patent to all, and the savages did not pause to see whether the wound was a mortal one.

"Iron balls hurt when they burst," said Jack, turning from the spectacle of the bloody face, and several minutes later the cave was tenantless so far as animation was concerned.

Two of the wounded Indians had been put beyond misery by Mouseh's tomahawk, which in this case did a humane service, while the third died without the aid of that weapon.

Near the mouth of the corridor lay the giant form of Lava-Bed Kit, the revolver still clenched in his right hand, and his face, pale as death, turned toward the fire, which burned fiercer than before.

Captain Jack led his band into the passage toward which he had lately sprung, with Reesa South in his arms, and the journey underground to the new stronghold began.

Below the surface of the Lava-Beds, as I have said, a perfect honeycomb of dark passages exists. Therefore the savage can retreat from one stronghold to another—miles distant—without once showing his face above the earth. Against such disadvantages our troops were compelled to fight the Indians, and the considering reader has long since ceased to wonder at the prolongation of the war.

Through some of these caves rapid streams make their way, and emerge into daylight, eventually to greet the ocean that laves the Pacific slope.

The underground retreat was made in silence. The sullen roar of the mortars never left the red-skins' ears, and ever and anon the explosion of the iron missiles sounded dangerously near.

"Here we fight to the death!" said the Modoc chief, in a determined tone, suddenly pausing, and waving the torch above his head. "The blue-coats shall never drive Mouseh from this stronghold."

Very soon a fire of sage-bush illuminated the interior of a cave, smaller than the one just vacated, but better adapted to a stubborn and successful defense.

"The shells of the big mouthed guns do not reach here," said Scar-faced Charley, with a grim smile of satisfaction. "We are four miles from the place where the iron killed our braves."

"Yes, four miles," said Jack. "Charley, where think you is Artena?"

"Dead!" was the reply. "Shell blow her all to pieces."

The expression that crossed the Modoc's face told that he would fain not believe this. Jack could not believe that Artena was the enemy's spy, and he would receive her into his confidence again were she to return.

Why should Artena, who was a Modoc, betray her own people?

Mouseh lowered fierce glances upon Baltimore Bot, who had boldly accused Artena of treason, and declared that he had heard her deliver the spy's message to General Gillem.

His story had occupied the time that intervened between the girl's entrance into the Modoc stronghold and the arrival of Kit and Cohoon above it; and, as the reader has seen, Jack's chiefs, none of whom bore Arlena any good-will, decided that she should die."

But the fatal shell seemed to have accomplished the task assigned to the tomahawk.

'Reesa (permit us, reader, to call the scout's child by the pretty nickname which he had bestowed upon her) recovered consciousness before the new fort was reached, and, after a long time, realized her position. She was exercised almost to insanity concerning the fate of her father, and was afraid to question her jailer about him. So she spared her breath, and when she saw the blood-stained face of Evan Harris, she started forward with the cry of "father!"

"Father? he's not your father!" cried Baltimore Bob, and grasping the girl rudely he flung her away.

She described several mad circles toward the wall, and with a cry of shame for the brutal act, Captain Jack bounded forward to snatch her from the stones.

But he did not succeed, and striking the wall a fearful blow with her head, 'Reesa South sunk to the floor, again bereft of consciousness. Then the red rebel sprung toward the ruffian, and whirled him around until they stood face to face.

"Bob must treat pale girl better," said Jack, calmly. "If he fling her away any more, he shall leave Lava-Beds."

An oath shot from the torturer's lips.

"What is she to you?" he demanded, with flashing eyes. "Does Mouseh stoop from the Generalship of a great war to interfere with the business of one of his spies? The girl is mine! I sent the young bucks to the Lost River, and paid them to bring her to me. So, Mouseh, attend to the conduct of the war, and I'll attend to my own affairs. I think we understand each other perfectly, now."

He did not wait for Jack to reply, but turned to the young ranger, who, lying on the ground, had heard with strange emotions the angry words of the twain.

"Get up," said Baltimore Bob, addressing him. "I want to talk with you."

Slowly, for the loss of blood had told seriously on his strength, the ranger rose to his feet, and calmly faced the rascal.

"White man, there's an enemy near who has a blood score to settle with you," said Bob. "He saved you from the vengeance of Mouseh last night, for, let me tell you that it is now day. Perhaps you can guess who that enemy is. I will summon him hither."

The Indian turned with a curious smile and had advanced a step toward the corridor, when the youth strode forward, and put forth his hand, for he was unbound.

"Stay!" he said. "I know you. You need not change your garb. You are the white man who arrested the arm of Captain Jack last night. You are the deadliest enemy I have on earth. Let us settle the old score now, and settle it forever."

"We will!" cried Baltimore Bob, and, as he wheeled, he drew a revolver. "You shot me once for the love of 'Reesa South. Men don't always kill at fifty paces; but at this distance, 'Van Harris, I am a death-shot, with the revolver. Yes, we'll settle the old score, and settle it forever."

With the last word the shining hammer shot back with the fateful clicks that follow such movement, and the would-be-murderer raised his arm.

But, simultaneously with the latter movement, Evan Harris' right hand shot upward, then forward, and closed on a revolver!

"Who threw him that weapon!" demanded Baltimore Bob, forgetting, in his anger, that he was at the mercy of his foe.

His eye swept the red group as he spoke, but not a lip answered him.

"I'm your equal now, Rafe Todd," cried the young ranger's voice. "Come, let us finish this business."

"I will not!" cried the renegade—"not now, at least," and then he turned to the Modoc chief.

"Mouseh, you threw him that firearm. You lie if you say you didn't. You hate me for—I don't know what. Step out here. Don't act the coward's part. I'll fight you fair."

The next moment Captain Jack snatched a revolver from Hooker Jim's hands, and boldly confronted the painted white man.

CHAPTER V

THE TWO KLAMATHS.

Two hours after the Indians' departure from the cave wherein the Union shell had augmented the ranks of death, a figure let itself down through the hole in the roof, and alighted near the now dying fire.

It was the figure of an Indian, dressed in semi-barbaric garb, and he darted a look of mingled surprise and disappointment about the cavern. When his eyes fell upon the shell-stricken Modocs, six in number, he bounded to the spot, and soon six scalps hung at his leathern belt, faced with the well-known U. S. escutcheon.

He held a torch near the dead faces as though he looked for a particular one, which he did not find. For he shook his head, much chagrined at something, and abruptly turned away.

Then, holding the torch above his head, he advanced to the corridor where Kit South had fallen, and stooped over the figure that lay near the mouth.

The position of the scout had remained unchanged for two hours, and the Indian gently raised the head and put his ear to his lips.

But no signs of life seemed to reward him, until he tore the dark-gray hunting-jacket open, and placed his tawny hand over the heart.

Then a smile and a low ejaculation of joy parted his lips, and he rose quickly to his feet.

Lava-Bed Kit was not dead!

As the Indian dropped the head, a long black curl disengaged itself and fell to the ground.

This proclaimed the path of Baltimore Bob's bullet, and

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te
the furrow plowed along the temple was rank with hardened gore. . . .

The savage soon left the cave, but after an absence of several minutes, returned with water in his pouch.

Then he knelt over the scout and set to work to restore him to consciousness, which, after awhile, he succeeded in doing. Kit opened his eyes upon a swarthy face revealed by the torch.

"So you've got me yet," were his first words, and then, putting forth his arms, he uttered a cry of horror.

"Say!" and he almost started to his feet. "Indian, I had 'Reesa in my arms when I made you stand aside! Tell me where the gal is now; tell me what you've done with 'Reesa, you red-livered —"

He paused suddenly, for he had recognized the Indian.

"Cohoon, is it you?"

The Indian smiled.

"Yes, Cohoon is with Kit," he said.

"Where's my gal?"

The Indian mournfully shook his head.

"Why, you saw me start from the cave," said Kit.

"Cohoon did; he saw Baltimore Bob shoot Kit—"

"Stop!" cried the scout, putting forth his hand to strengthen the interruption. "Did Baltimore Bob shoot me?"

"Yes, Kit."

The scout gritted his teeth till they cracked.

"Now look hyar, Indian. I'm going to kill that brute. Don't you tech a hair of his head; if you do I'll—there's no telling what I might do to you. I swear that he's my meat, and nobody has a better right to his life than old Kit South.

Do you hear me?"

The Indian nodded.

"Then go on."

"When Kit fell, a big shell come into cave," continued Cohoon, "and it make big noise. Kill heap Modocs, and put fire out. Cohoon see Artena fall, and he jump down into cave, pick her up and run. He tried to pull 'Reesa from Kit, but him hold too fast, and Cohoon had to run on."

"Then you don't know any thing 'bout 'Reesa!" said the scout, with a sigh.

Cohoon shook his head. "Jack . . .

"Mebbe she's dead and mebbe she isn't. Where are the Indians now?"

"They go down black hole there, and now stand in big cave near the hidden river. They 'fraid of shells here. Blue-coats not shelling now. Donald withdraw his braves while shells fly."

"I know he was to report this midnight," said Kit. "Cohoon, shall we go to camp?"

"Not till we find 'Reesa."

"That's so, boy; give me your hand. I don't see General Gillem again until I know what's become of my gal, and kill Baltimore Bob. I swear it, by hokey! I do."

The scout soon discovered that he could walk, and when the Warm Spring Indian pointed out the effects of the shell, he suddenly turned to him:

"Look hyar, Cohoon. Let us turn ourselves into Modocs," he said. "Hyar's the trinkets to do it with, and plenty of paint."

But the Warm Springer shook his head.

"Captain Jack got just fifty-six men," he said, "and he know just who have been killed. Kit and Cohoon can't become Modocs, but they might make good Klamaths."

"But where's the material?"

"There!" and as the Indian spoke he pointed to the dead Modocs.

"But, Cohoon, this isn't the Klamaths' war."

"Jack looking every way for Klamath braves. Arrow-Head promise to help Modocs; but the old chief 'fraid of blue-coats' big guns. Cohoon lived with the Klamath Lake Indians off and on for long time, and he can paint just like 'em."

"And hev'n't I hunted and fished with the dirty greasers, too?" cried the scout. "You just ought to hear me bladge Klamath jargon once. Why, I kin out-talk old Arrow-Head himself. Yes, we'll turn into Klamaths right off, and we'll tell Jack the biggest pack of lies that ever fell upon his ears."

In less than no time the mutilated Indians were stripped, and the twain bore the garments, with the warriors' paint-pouches

to the brink of a small stream that flowed through the lavaed fissures, perhaps forty feet below the fused surface.

A lone torch enabled them to accomplish the weird metamorphosis, and after the lapse of an hour they rose to their feet, veritable Klamath Indians.

"My name's Coquil, or the Dog that Bites," said the painted scout, with a broad grin of humor. "What's your handle, Cohoon?"

The savage thought a moment, then answered:

"Wiaquil."

"The Dog that Sleeps—that's good," answered Kit. "Now let's be off like a pot-leg. I'm uncommon anxious to see what kind of a Klamath I make."

The garments which the twain had cast aside were deposited on a shelf above the bank, perhaps for future use, while those which belonged to the Modocs, and not used in the transformation, were thrown into the stream.

As the Modocs dress similar to the Klamath Lake tribes, Cohoon experienced no difficulty in finding good disguises, and they deemed themselves well hidden when they stuck their revolvers in their belts, and left the spot.

For several moments Kit and his red ally paused in the cave on their way to the trail of Jack and his band, and regaled themselves on a bit of food which Cohoon supplied from his pouch.

They conversed but little, and that in the Klamath tongue, which both spoke quite readily, and presently resumed the march.

As they entered the mouth of the corridor, which led to the Modocs' new stronghold, a veritable giant dropped into the cavern through the same opening which had previously admitted the two spies to scenes of danger and death.

I say the new arrival was a giant.

He was six feet tall, and massively built. His skin betokened him a half-breed, and he was clad in the garments of the Western scout and Indian-fighter.

In brief, this man was Donald McKay, the head chief of the Warm Spring Indians, and an oft-repeated description of him in the daily journals have acquainted the reader with his *personals*, long ere this.

He saw nothing but the retreating forms of the spies, and as he struck the ground, he drew a cocked revolver from his belt.

"So the accursed Klamaths are mixing in the war, eh?" he muttered, with rising indignation, starting toward our friends. "By heavens! Captain Jack shall never hear what old Arrow-Head's emissaries have to tell him. Two Klamaths shall never cross the California line again—not if my revolver is true to my eye."

The fire still revealed the two spies, and the half-breed's weapon shot upward to the level of his stern, black eye.

And the dark-brown finger was pressing the trigger that would speed the deadly lead to Kit South's brain, when the sharp twang of a bowstring sounded behind the chief, and he staggered against the wall, with an arrow sticking in his side.

But he recovered in a moment, and started toward the Indian, who was rushing forward to complete his victory.

"I'm not dead yet!" hissed the Lava-Bed Ranger, and his voice and action caused the Indian to execute an abrupt halt.

He tried to fit another arrow to his bow; but the scout was too near, so he wheeled, with a cry of regret, and darted toward the underground river.

The next instant Donald McKay covered him with the revolver; but the shot took no effect, for the savage was zig-zaging at a terrible rate through the demi-darkness.

Hoping for another chance, the half-breed scout ran on, only to see a dark form leap from the bank, and to hear a dull plash in the water.

"Curse the arrow!" grated the Warm Spring chief, turning chagrined from his ill success. "Indeed it baffled a choice shot of mine. But I'll catch the Klamath ambassadors yet. If I can prevent it, they shall never revive Jack's hopes by promises of succor. I'm on the trail of Klamath beasts now; but I may fail. I don't know. The best of hunters miss sometimes."

A moment later the cavern was tenantless. Donald McKay was seeking the scalps of his two trusty scouts, for his sharp eyes had failed to penetrate their disguise.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PISTOL AND THE KNIFE.

WHEN Baltimore Bob discovered that Mouseh, or Captain Jack, was ready for the conflict to which he had been dared, a nervous twitching came to his lips, and he exhibited signs of shirking the duel.

The Modoc chieftain noticed these ill-concealed symptoms of cowardice, and hastily glanced at his chiefs, with a faint smile, for he it known that, since the day when the notorious Ben Wright massacred his forefathers, twenty years prior to the date of our romance, a laugh had never rippled over his lips.

"Mouseh," said Bob, "tell me why you threw my foe a pistol. He gave me a bullet once. I carry it yet among my ribs, and I owe him an ounce or so of lead."

The big, insulting voice had dwindled into one of milder tone. Baltimore, when confronted by such a man as Captain Jack—whose course in this affair was just—was a coward, as all bullies are.

"I will not see a white man shot down like a dog," was the reply. "He is your prisoner. I gave him to you in the other cave, because you have spied well for me, and I knew not how else to reward you than by giving you the life of the man you hate. But he shall not die like the helpless cur. I threw him the pistol he holds that he might have an equal chance with you."

The ochered renegade was silent for a minute.

"But you hate me for something else, Mouseh. I know it. You have let your hate crop out more times than one in the last five years."

Slowly the Modoc chief unbuttoned the stolen coat that covered his brawny breast, and drew from the inner pocket a dirty, dingy paper.

He stepped nearer the white Modoc as he unfolded the sheet, and at last held the document before his eyes.

The printing on the sheet read thus :

“ FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.

“ HEAD-QUARTERS; FORT CROOK, LASSEN CO., CAL., }
“ May 21st, 1868. }

“ By command of the General commanding this military district, I offer five hundred dollars reward for the living body of Rafe Todd, fourth corporal Company K, —th regiment U. S. Cavalry, who, after basely shooting Sergeant Grosvenor, deserted the service during the night of the 3d inst. He is suspected of having joined the troublesome Modocs, near Klamath Lake. One-half of the above reward will be paid for his dead body.”

The hand-bill bore the signature of the officer in command at Fort Crook, and, on the whole, was a document sufficient to pale the cheeks of the murderer and deserter.

“ I hate you because you treacherously slew your brother blue-coat, and ran away from the flag of your country,” said Captain Jack, when he was satisfied that Rafe Todd had mastered the “reward.” “ You owe Mouseh your life. You did me a service when you came from the big fork—a service which I never forgot, and when a scout put this paper in my hands and begged that I would tell my braves of your crime, I hid it in my bosom and kept my mouth shut. Ah, if they had known that gold could be had for your scalp, you would not be standing here to-day. During this war, you have done much for me—I acknowledge it, while I hate you from the bottom of my heart. Here your life is safe. My chiefs shall not touch you. Do you want to fight Mouseh now ?”

The question, so abruptly put, startled the deserter.

“ No,” he said. “ I would live to repay you for saving me.”

“ Then we drop our pistols,” and the Modoc returned his weapon to his belt.

“ Your hand, Mouseh,” said Rafe Todd, stepping forward. “ If we were never friends, let us be such now.”

But Captain Jack, drawing himself to his full height, shrunk from the proffered hand.

“ Did Mouseh ever take that hand ?” he asked.

“ No,” said the deserter, abashed.

“ 'Tis well ; he said he would never touch it. He never will.”

The painted white bit his nether lip till it bled, and with the fire of anger consuming his heart, wheeled suddenly upon Evan Harris.

"Now you know who Baltimore Bob is!" he cried. "Presently you shall see what he can do."

"Presently?" echoed the young ranger. "I would see now."

"Curse you, you shall!"

"You'll fight me, then?"

"Yes!"

"I'm heartily glad of it. I don't know how you escaped death that night—enough that I behold you alive. If I held no enmity against you, I would call you to account for the brutality you have just flung upon yon fair girl."

"Ha! ha! 'Van Harris," laughed Rafe Todd. "So you still appear 'Reesa South's champion."

"I do. Had I possessed a weapon when you flung her against the wall, your life would have paid the penalty of that act."

"No more!" cried the deserter. "If you open your lips again, I'll shoot you before you have time to shut them. I'm going to give you a show for life. Now drop your arm, as I have dropped mine. Hooker Jim will count three, and when he has uttered the third numeral, we fire."

With the revolver gripped firmly at his side, Rafe Todd retreated three paces and paused.

"Begin," he commanded, glancing at the savage, whose name he had just mentioned.

In his guttural, the chief began:

"One—two—th—"

The last numeral was but forming on the red lips when the renegade's weapon shot up, and was discharged!

With a wild cry, Evan Harris reeled, and then fell heavily to the ground.

If he was dead—and as motionless as a corpse he lay—it was the foulest of murders.

"Bob take quick aim," said Jack, audibly, with his eyes riveted upon the young ranger.

"Mebbe you think I took advantage? He was slow in raising, that is all, and the result is his fault."

Hooker Jim now said that Rafe Todd did not fire until he had distinctly pronounced the last numeral, and, as the victim was one of their enemies, the chiefs who knew that he lied, did not dispute his asseverations.

"This score settled, now what do we do?" said the duelist, turning to Jack. "Must I take the secret trail that leads to the white tents? I am ready to do Mouseh any service he requests."

"We stay here to-night," said the chief, "and you will stay with us. Take care of your motherless fawn," and he glanced at 'Reesa South, who began to show signs of returning consciousness.

The renegade turned and raised her from the ground.

"I know you," she said, feebly. "You are Rafe Todd."

"A name which, in your eyes, is a synonym for Satan," he said, with a smile. "Girl, I am not merciless; I love you truly—"

"This is no place to talk of love, Rafe Todd," she interrupted him. "And besides, you know I would never listen to such words from your lips. I hate the deserter and detest the renegade."

The words seemed to pierce his heart.

"Then you love 'Van Harris?"

"I do."

"Then go and tell him so."

As he spoke, he pointed to the prostrate rival, and the smile on his lips was the incarnation of deviltry.

She followed his hand, and, with a shriek started from his arms.

"Go and tell him that you love him," repeated the villain, pained with the pain he was causing the pure heart before him. "He won't blush to hear the sweet confession now."

For a moment she stood like a statue before the deserter, and then started toward the man who loved her truly.

But, midway, she suddenly paused.

"This is your work, Rafe Todd," she cried. "I know you shot him, and so certain as my name is Theresa, I'll pay you for this deed, if he's dead."

He laughed derisively in her face, and, still laughing, looked

at the Indians, whose faces were stern, for they had watched the scene, with their sympathies on the side of the girl.

'Reesa dropped beside her lover, and had just lifted one of the hands, when, with one accord, the savages sprung toward the mouth of the corridor, from which several hours before they had emerged into the cave.

The cause of their sudden action and the ejaculations of delight which filled the cavern, was revealed by two Klamath Indians, who had suddenly made their appearance.

"Back!" shouted Captain Jack, when he had hastily pressed the new-comers' hands. "Give the runners breathing-space! We will hear the better what Arrow-Head has said."

The Indians, eager to hear the message which the two runners seemed anxious to deliver, drew back, and paused between 'Reesa and the fire, thus effectually screening her from the eyes of the new arrivals.

"Who does Arrow-Head send to Mouseh, and what does he say?" asked Jack, breaking the silence that followed the forming of the red ranks.

"He sends Coquil and Wiaquil," answered one of the Klamaths, in his native language, which is almost as intelligible to the Modoc as his own. "He says that he can not send his braves to Mouseh until the moon puts on a new dress of silver."

Without a smile, but with delight in his eyes, the Modoc glanced at his warriors and chiefs.

"The moon shoots her silver arrows upon the earth after two sleeps. Arrow-Head's braves will be here soon."

A low murmur of satisfaction pervaded the red listeners' ranks.

As he finished, Captain Jack turned to the runners again; but ere he could address them, an athletic young Indian, not yet seventeen, leaped over the heads of the warriors who stood behind their chief, and confronted the twain, with a cry of triumph!

The savages, knowing that something remarkable was about to occur, crowded forward, and Jack commanded them to halt.

The boy had not yet spoken; he was waiting for breath, for

his leap had, for the moment, deprived him of that necessary of life.

Alas! for him, he never regained it!

For the spokesman of the Klamath runners suddenly darted upon him and clutched his fair-skinned throat.

Then, with ease, he lifted the youth from the ground, and, in full view of the Modoc nation, drove a hunting-knife to his heart!

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE LION'S DEN.

For once in his life, at least, Donald McKay was disappointed.

He was tolerably confident of intercepting the two Klamaths, and with this end in view, turned into a corridor which he thought would eventually lead him to the passage which the twain traversed. He had spent many hours in the lava-caves, and deemed himself thoroughly acquainted with the tortuous, subterranean passages. But the best of hunters err at times, and McKay was not an exception. He walked a long time before he halted, and then it was against a wall, whose smooth surface, feeling like glass, proclaimed its scoriac composition.

The corridor's end had been reached.

For several minutes the chief stood in the gloom without speaking. He felt the walls of the narrow chamber into which he had stalked, and then gave himself up to reflection.

He cursed himself for allowing the Klamaths to escape. He could not prevent them from reaching Jack now, nor could he see how he had been led to the spot where he stood.

When a hunter gets lost in a place perfectly familiar to him, it galls his very heart, and generally throws him into a fit of anger.

This was the effect it produced upon Donald McKay, at no time a very impassionate man, and in audible tones he upbraided himself for a lack of caution.

But suddenly, between breaths, he paused, for a suspicious noise had saluted his practiced ear. The sound, whatever it might be, was not repeated, and this fact fastened itself upon the mind of the ranger.

"I'll find out what it means!" he murmured, with determination. "If it's an Indian, I'll fix him. I've got to stay here till another night, for you don't catch Don McKay crawling from these beds during the day."

He moved slowly toward the entrance to the chamber, and then paused again. Then, after a minute, he moved down the dark corridor, feeling the wall on either side, until he discovered an opening on the left.

Here he stopped and crouched, and a moment later a heavy body leaped upon him.

He went to the ground at full length beneath the assaulter, and a brief struggle followed—a struggle in which the chief turned the tables and bore his antagonist back.

His left hand gripped a slender throat, when a sudden writhing of his foe threw a sleeve across his face.

With a cry of surprise he partly released the grip, and bent forward.

"Artena," he cried.

The other gasped a moment for breath, and then faintly uttered his name.

"Heavens! girl, how near you have been to the dark river," he said. "It makes me shudder to think of it, and I fancy that Cohoon would not spare his chief if his hand were to send Artena to the hunting-lands of her people."

The mention of the Indian's name startled the girl.

"Did Donald cross Cohoon's trail?" she asked.

"No."

"Where has he been?"

"I came from the cave where the shell burst."

"And not meet Cohoon? curious," mused Artena, in an audible tone. "Cohoon brought Artena to the little cave by the hidden river, and told her to wait till he come back. He go after Kit and his girl."

It was Donald McKay's turn to start now.

"Kit dead?" he said.

"Yes."

"Girl, you're mad. Old Kit South is not dead. I feel it in my bones."

"Baltimore Bob shoot him, and shell kill 'Reesa."

The girl's confident tone threw a spell of silence about the half-breed.

"Artena heard you come; she think you Cohoon, so she crawl from cave, but find you Donald. Come back to cave. We talk; Cohoon come back by'm by."

So the Squaw Spy guided the chief to a small cavern which she had lit up with a delicate fire of sage-brush.

One of those many streams that flow beneath the fused surface of the Lava-Beds bordered one side of the cave, and Donald McKay stooped and drank of the cold water before he spoke.

Then he returned to the girl, who was carefully replenishing the fire, and for an hour she enchained his attention by a narrative of her adventures since they had met—adventures well known to the reader.

"You have bad news for the Rangers, Artena," said Donald. "Kit dead, Cohoon missing, and Evan Harris' fate wrapped in mystery. The Modocs seem to be getting the best of me. But," and he sprung to his feet somewhat excited and quite angry, "but we'll outwit them yet. Girl, you've got to go with me."

"No; I must wait for Cohoon."

"He will not, can not hunt you; you must hunt him."

The next moment she stood before him, and her hand touched his arm.

"Do you really think so?" she asked, in a doubtful tone.

"I do. Cohoon should have been here long ere this. Circumstances keep him away. I want you with me. We go to the Bloody Cave. Jack is there."

"Ah!"

"Yes, and the Klamaths are with him—curse their meddling hearts. If it hadn't been for an arrow in the side, two hours ago, I would have defeated one red embassy. My revolver covered the head of one Klamath, and before he could have touched the ground, his comrade would have tumbled against him. But, Artena, we waste time here. I know where I am now. I was lost—utterly lost—when I heard

the slight noise you made; but all is right now, I say. I've slept in this very cave more than once. We chased four horse-stealing Shoshones hither long ago, and caught them as they were launching a boat on that black river."

"Ha! if we but possessed a canoe now," ejaculated Artena. "This water runs past the Bloody Cave."

"I know it," said McKay. "Let me look a moment. I hid the boat after we had killed the red thieves."

The Indian spy watched the half-breed with bated breath while he searched for the boat, and when she saw him emerge from the gloom with a long canoe in his arms, she uttered an exclamation of joy.

"It's hardly seaworthy, as the sailors would say," said the chief, bearing the boat into the fire-light. "Time has warped the back and frame, but as we're going down-stream, and that terribly fast, it may do."

"It will do," cried Artena, and then they fell to mending the large rents in the canoe.

Half an hour was spent in this labor, and amid expressions of satisfaction, the barque was borne to the stream.

The situation of the Bloody Cave was well known to the chief of the intrepid rangers. It was near three miles below the spot they now occupied, and the hidden river's bed was devoid of dangerous rocks. But sharp crags projected from the banks, and it would take an experienced navigator of dark rivers to keep a canoe clear of them.

But Donald McKay knew the dangers, and wisely kept in the middle of the stream. He clutched the paddle firmly, and kept it in the water, but made no noise.

Artena sat silent in the bow of the boat, a revolver in her right hand, and with ears on the alert.

Eyes were not needed in that cimmerian gloom.

It was not the first time that the current had swept Donald McKay to the cave now tenanted by Captain Jack and his band, and, as he turned his head to tell Artena that the most dangerous places were passed, the faint report of a pistol reached their ears.

It was the shot that dropped Evan Harris before the deserter!

"Slowly now!" whispered Artena, bending forward, and touching Donald's arm. "That means something."

He did not speak; but drove his paddle down till it struck the river bed, when the boat began to move slowly.

Presently a faint gleam of light fell upon the water not far ahead of the voyagers, and at its edge the scout turned the boat ashore.

They soon discovered that the light on the water was caused by the reflection of the burnished roof of a corridor above the bank, and ascending to it, they looked through a brief passage upon an exciting scene in Bloody Cave.

Their position enabled them to look over the heads of the Indians, and they found that they had reached the spot in time to behold a thrilling tableau.

The tallest of the two Klamaths—Coquil by name—had just slain the Modoc boy, and was holding the body out to Captain Jack, who shrunk from receiving it, with horror depicted upon every lineament of his swarthy face.

The clicking of carbine and revolver locks were distinctly heard by the watchers on the bank, and the Indians looked at Mouseh, expecting him to order a massacre of the murderer.

But the Modoc had no intention of obliging his chiefs; for he stepped forward and addressed the Klamath.

“Coquil has killed a Modoc,” he said, sternly. “Let him tell why he did this?”

“Coquil will speak. He and Wiaquil were devouring some venison in the deep cave, when the boy came, and we gave him food. We told him that we were from Arrow-Head, and after awhile he went to get his gun which he had hidden beside the river. All at once he shot at his Klamath brethren—basely shot at them from behind a rock, and then fled like the deer. The ball crossed Wiaquil’s eyes, and made him blind for a while. So, Mouseh, when he came here, Coquil’s blood became as hot as boiling water, and when he thought of the base shot he could not bridle his knife arm.”

Captain Jack glanced at his chiefs when the Klamath finished, and saw the vengeful expression leave their faces.

They pardoned Coquil when they heard the cause for the death-blow he had just delivered.

“Coquil and his brother are still Mouseh’s friends. Se-

questa was a wild boy at the best," and the chieftain glanced at the corpse which the Klamath had lowered to the ground.

"We will stay and fight with Mousch till Arrow-Head comes," said Wiaquil, speaking for the first time, and when his voice reached the listeners on the cliff, Artena suddenly caught Donald's arm. Then her lips touched his ears.

"Wiaquil is not a Klamath," she whispered. "He is Cohoon!"

The words astounded the ranger and he shot her a look of incredulity.

"His voice can't deceive Artena," she returned.

Then McKay gazed intently at Wiaquil.

"Yes," he said, at length. "It is Cohoon; but who is the other?"

"Whom but Kit?"

Another brief, but thorough scrutiny.

"Kit South it is, by my soul! Well, they've stalked into the lion's den, and we stand on the threshold of the same dread place."

"But look! look!" cried Artena. "Behold the pale girl and her lover."

Donald McKay looked, and beheld 'Reesa South bending over Evan Harris.

The last scene had escaped his notice until that moment.

"I fear for my brave boys," he said, returning to the self-styled Klamaths, no doubt recognized by the reader upon their appearance. "If the red fiends do not suspect, all may yet be well."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RANGER'S SHOT.

THE intrepid chief of the Warm Spring Indians saw that he had missed the disguised scouts by losing his way among the Lava-Beds, and now he blessed the darkness that led him astray, for had he gained the objective point uppermost

in his mind, he would, in all probability, have driven the knife or bullet into the hearts of the spies.

He and Artena trembled for the safety of their friends after the recognition, and concluded to remain where they were and await events.

Donald could hardly resist the temptation to drop Captain Jack, the head and heart of the bloody Modoc war, and twice Artena preserved that red worthy's life by touching the ranger's arm as it unconsciously raised the weapon of death.

"Don't, Donald," she whispered, the last time. "Remember our friends are in peril."

Then his thoughts would recur to the peril of his friends, and the hammer would drop lightly upon the cartridge again.

After Wiaquil—or Cohoon—assured Jack that he and his friend would remain, a general hand-shaking took place.

Captain Jack was profuse in his marks of good-will, and his chiefs appeared pleased with the messengers and their message.

The last savage to take the runner's hands was that worthy called by his brethren, Baltimore Bob, but known to the reader under his true name of Rafe Todd.

During the pledging of friendship he had stood aloof, with his dark eyes fastened with suspicious glare upon the twain, and when he did move forward it was by some sudden impulse.

"Bob," whispered Artena to Donald McKay, "does he see beneath the paint?"

"I don't know. I've been watching him for a long time," was the ranger's reply. "I half believe that he suspects something. There! see how he looks into Cohoon's eyes. We must watch him now; he suspects; I know it!"

Rafe Todd turned suddenly from the runners and strode toward 'Reesa South, who was supporting her lover's head in her lap, unconscious of what was transpiring around her. She knew that strange Indians had entered the cave, for, through the red ranks that stood between her and the newcomers, she had caught glimpses of them.

But her whole attention was centered upon the young

ranger, and no eyes save hers had noticed the slight movements that told of returning life.

"'Reesa," said Rafe Todd, and the scout's daughter started at her name. "After the excitement of the past few hours you need rest. Come with me. There is a spot near where you will find a soft bed, and I know you will enjoy a slumber."

He spoke kinder than was his wont, and, stooping, gently touched her arm, as he finished.

"I do not want rest," she answered, involuntarily shrinking from his touch. "See, Rafe Todd, he is not dead."

The white Indian started.

"'Reesa, you must be mistaken," he said. "He is as dead as Canby."

"Touch his pulse."

She lifted Evan Harris' right hand, and Rafe Todd tremblingly sought the pulses.

"Well well," he said, "he is not dead," and then he turned to the Indians.

"Miwah," he called, and a giant Indian, known to readers of the Modoc war as the Curly-Headed Doctor, came forward.

"The pale fellow is not dead," continued the deserter, addressing the medicine-man of his adopted people. "If you can get him up again, do so. He may be of service to us."

As he spoke he gave Miwah a look, which said: "See that you kill him," and then turned to 'Reesa again.

"Now, girl," he said, "you will seek your chamber. I pledge my word of honor that if the spark of life in him can be fanned into a flame, it shall be done."

The scout's daughter smiled; the thought of Rafe Todd possessing honor was quite enough to provoke a smile; but she did not say any thing, and rose to her feet.

"We have visitors," said the deserter, in a low voice, as he led the white girl—his blood-bought captive—toward the Klamaths. "They're Klamaths," and here his lips curled with a sneer of contempt, "and I was surprised to see them. Look! are they not fine-looking fellows, 'Reesa?"

The Indians, knowing that the deserter was conducting the girl to a smaller compartment, made way, and presently the twain found themselves face to face with the runners.

On the part of one runner—Wiaquil—the same immobility of countenance remained; but his companion started slightly when his eyes fell upon our white heroine.

Rafe Todd caught the dark eyes that shot from 'Reesa's face to his, and quickened his gait.

But Coquil suddenly stepped forward and clutched 'Reesa's arm.

"Girl pretty," he said, in the Klamath tongue. "Who she be?"

"She's mine," said the deserter, meeting the scout's look of feigned inquisitiveness with a bold glance. "She belongs to Baltimore Bob."

"What'll Bob take for her?"

"Won't sell her," said the white Indian, jerking the girl's arm from the red hand, and starting forward again.

"Did Mouseh give pale girl to Bob?" asked the runner, turning to the Modoc chief.

"Yes."

"She make good Klamath squaw. Coquil got no one to warm his lodge. He like to buy pale girl, for he got heaps yellow stones."

"Bob won't sell his pale squaw for all the gold in California," returned Jack. "So Coquil must go back squawless to the clear lake."

The messenger smiled, and stepped to the side of his companion, to whom he said a few words in a tone that failed to reach the ears of the watchers on the river bank.

To his communication Wiaquil replied, and looked up at Jack.

"The trail from Arrow-Head's lodge to Mouseh's cave is hard to travel," he said. "Wiaquil and his brother saw the sun and the stars, and now they would sleep awhile that they may be refreshed for the war-path against the blue-coats."

Jack turned and held a short council with his chiefs, after which a number left the cave, until the great Modoc and Hooker Jim alone remained.

The Curly-Headed Doctor had mysteriously disappeared with his patient.

"Our brothers will rest here," said Jack, describing a circle with his hand. "Mouseh hopes that they may not be

disturbed, for no braves shall enter the cave while they lie here. The Modocs have departed to watch the blue-coats, for the sun is high in the heavens now. Hooker Jim will sleep in the mouth of yonder hole, and the lightest step will touch his ear."

Then the Modoc touched the hands of his guests again, and chivalrously bade them good-night.

With a *nonchalance* simply remarkable, the runners doffed their blankets, and spread them on the ground; then they laid their Spencers between their robes, and threw themselves upon the latter.

Hooker Jim looked on all the preparations for slumber with an unsuspecting eye, and laid down in the mouth of the corridor, in whose dark recesses Jack and his braves had disappeared.

Watchful eyes regarded the tableau revealed by the flickering fire, and after an hour's silence Donald McKay turned to Artena.

"They are safe now, I think," he said. "Baltimore Bob has been completely hoodwinked. You must go to the General now."

"And you?"

"Oh, I will stay. You will tell him about Mousch's new stronghold; how to approach it; in short, every thing you know about it. Take the canoe. You can paddle, and you know the way from this spot.

"Yes; but Artena would be near Cohoon when he sleeps in Jack's cave. Donald don't know what he is to Artena."

"Ah! but I do, girl," was the ranger's reply. "I have known it long, too. Are you afraid to meet Jack?"

"No; he does not believe Artena a traitress."

"Good. Now watch the boys till I find the boat."

So Donald McKay glided from the girl's side, and moved down the bank toward the underground river.

He knew where he had moored the boat, and he reached the spot to find the craft missing!

"What does this mean?" he ejaculated, inaudibly. "Surely no Indian would steal it without suspicions. It wasn't an Indian boat. Even in the dark a red-skin could have told that."

The ranger was nonplused, and wandered down the shore, feeling among the sharp rocks for the missing canoe.

But his search was fruitless; not a clue to the fate of the barque could be discovered, and, trying to plan for the future, he turned toward Artena.

No doubt she was alarmed about his absence, for he had been gone a long time, and he wondered what she would say when informed of the work of the waves, or Indians.

Donald approached the spot cautiously, and at length reached the very place he had vacated.

But no Artena greeted his return!

He held his breath.

"Artena?"

No reply answered him.

"Artena?"

Silence, as before.

Then he groped about for several minutes and returned to the same old place, admitting reluctantly that Artena, like the boat, was gone!

He could not conjecture the cause of her desertion; but he resolved to wait awhile for her return.

He lay down on the bank in such a position that he could look upon the spies sleeping soundly in the lion's den, and over his head the leaden moments passed.

All at once the ranger chief moved, and his eyes flashed upon an object in the cave.

This object had suddenly made its appearance in the shape of a man, and by stepping over the prostrate body of Hooker Jim.

The dim light revealed it but indistinctly to Donald McKay, yet he saw the tomahawk clutched in the right hand, and he recognized the face.

For a moment the new-comer paused, listened, and looked.

The sleeping spies were the objects of his attention, and seemingly satisfied with his observation, he again advanced toward them.

Simultaneously with the second advance, there was a movement of the ranger's right arm.

It crept over the edge of the bank, and a revolver filled the hand.

"Let him lift that hatchet over them," grated the scout. "Just let him do it, and I'll bore his brain, if I lose my life for it the next minute!"

The Indian continued to approach the scouts with the noiseless tread of the cat.

Donald McKay could hardly believe that they slept, yet such seemed to be the fact, and he wished he could rouse them without resorting to the pistol, which might bring destruction upon the heads of all.

At length the savage paused over the spies, and then dropped upon his knees beside Kit South.

For a moment he seemed to contemplate his prey, as the panther does his before he springs from the leafy bough upon it.

How Donald McKay watched him!

Not even when he heard a voice in his rear, did he move his eyeballs.

The noise in his rear, slight as it was, told him much.

Dusky foes were gliding upon him from the gloom that slept upon the river.

He knew it, but the knowledge did not unnerve his arm. He knew, too, that the tomahawk would immediately follow his capture, for Captain Jack had offered a tempting reward for his scalp—not his person, which he did not want.

Suddenly, as if impelled by a terrible impulse, the Indian's tomahawk shot upward.

The next moment the cave resounded with the report of a revolver, and the savage staggered to his feet with a howl of rage!

Donald McKay waited no longer.

He leaped up and wheeled toward the river; but found himself in the midst of a dozen Indians!

Once, twice, thrice, he pressed his revolver against the red breasts and pulled the trigger, then flung wide his iron arms, and dashed forward—free again!

The flashes of pistols revealed him on the brink of the river, and the next moment he was gone!

CHAPTER IX.

JACK IS UNDECEIVED.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with Donald McKay's first shot, the two spies sprung to their feet.

They saw their would-be murderer recover his equilibrium, and dart toward Hooker Jim, before they could approach him.

Cohoon seemed to take in all at a single glance, for he threw his pistols up for a deadly shot; but the chief interposed his body, and the assassin made good his escape down the corridor.

They did not know positively who he was, but Cohoon smiled when he looked at his companion and whispered, "*Bob.*"

The shots fired at the intrepid ranger as he sprung toward the river, quickly followed the assassin's escape, and while yet the spies and Hooker Jim stood bewildered in the cave, Captain Jack and a dozen Indians appeared upon the scene.

The spies explained all, and Mousch promised to bring the murderous Modocs to justice. The chief firmly believed in the representations of his guests, and he could conceive of no motive that would prompt their death.

Presently the Indians on the bank descended into the cave, and the fiery nature of the Modoc was fully aroused when he heard of McKay's escape.

"What! in the black river and without a boat!" he cried, springing forward and replenishing the fire with his own hands. "He must be found for he can be found. The yellow-skinned chief shall not escape us now. Here are torches, plenty of them. Braves, snatch them from the fire! we will find the ranger before the sun sinks behind the hills above us."

With cries of vengeance the warriors sprung forward and secured sage-brush torches.

The spies each selected one, and joined in the mad band

that rushed up the acclivity and descended the opposite side, to the bank of the lone lost river. Captain Jack was foremost in the hunt for the ranger chief. McKay's proximity seemed to infuse new life into the Modoc's weary limbs; he was young again when on the trail of the army's greatest ally, Gillem's right-hand man.

Up and down the stream numerous torches flitted like baleful fires, but not a word was spoken. Jack swam to the opposite bank, and with renewed vigor and hope scoured its darkness for the bold man he hated. The Indians followed their own inclinations unquestioned, and finally the spies managed to separate themselves from the others and found themselves alone some distance up-stream.

Their seeming close hunting for McKay had elicited looks of approval from the Modocs, and their separation was covered by their zeal in the cause.

"We work for 'Reesa now, Cohoon," suddenly cried Kit South, as they shot around a ragged lava rock whose glistening side hid them from the Indians. "It is night again, for I got a peek at a star down there. They won't miss us for an hour, at least."

"But where is the girl?"

"Where that infernal Bob put her, no doubt."

"Does Kit know where the cave is?"

"Not exactly, but I know a place where he'd be likely to take her. Come, we climb over these rocks and get into the way that leads to it. You can't fool Kit South byarabouts; he's hunted too many bears in these beds."

Then they extinguished one of the torches and clambered over the broken rocks that partly blocked the mouth of a corridor to find themselves on a trail that might lead to the jaws of death.

"They won't catch the captain," whispered Kit, proudly as they hurried along. "He kin get along in that river without a boat, as well as he could with one. Cohoon, we owe Don much to-night."

The Warm Spring Indian nodded.

"Cohoon slept against his will; but he heard the shot, and he knows now that Donald shot Bob as he squatted over him with the hatchet."

"Do you think he hurt the devil much?"

"Arm hurt p'raps, for he ran away on his legs."

"Mebbe he's gone to 'Reesa!"

"Must watch for that."

"We will. I just want to get my finger on his throat once, for I believe the devil knows who we are, and if I can clutch his windpipe, he'll never trouble any more sleepers that's—"

Cohoon caught the scout's arm, and dropped the torch behind him.

"Look, Kit."

As he spoke the Indian drew the scout aside, and a torch greeted the latter's eyes.

"'Reesa's yonder, Cohoon."

"Mebbe so."

"I know it, come!"

The torch was extinguished, and they moved forward again.

"She's in the very cave I told you about," whispered the scout, "and we kin git right overhead and see who is with her."

And so they did.

The honeycombed condition of the lava-beds enabled the spies to ascend above the roof of the corridor which they were traversing, and presently they looked down into the chamber wherein the torch burned.

Kit South's expectations were realized.

His daughter tenanted the lava-bed, and she stood near the fire in a listening attitude. Something had lately roused her from a sound sleep as it seemed—perhaps the shots fired at McKay, and the tall savage who stood at the mouth or door of the chamber, appeared no less excited than herself.

He had stepped from his post of duty which was revealed by a blanket stretched upon the earth near the fire; and his face was turned from the girl whose eyes regarded him closely; for to him she looked, no doubt, for the solution of the mysterious shots.

'Reesa could have touched the low-browed ceiling of the cave with the tips of her fingers, but there was nothing upon which she might stand and draw herself up into the dark passage above.

All at once a pebble dropped at her feet.

She started just the least, and looked into the hole in the roof directly overhead.

She saw nothing; but a low voice said:

"Keep cool, girl, and raise your hands."

She glanced at the guard, still listening, and put her hands together above her head.

The next moment a great red hand encircled the wrists, and 'Reesa South was snatched from her prison in the twinkling of an eye!

"Now back, Cohoon," whispered a voice which caused the girl to start, and the next moment she clutched her preserver's arm.

"Father! is it not you?"

"Yes, 'Reesa," was the reply. "It's nobody but old Kit South, your father."

"Thank Heaven!"

"When we git out o' this, if we ever do, we will. We're in the fire yet, and it's a long ways out o' the blaze."

They pushed forward with more haste than caution, and succeeded in reaching the river in safety.

"Once across this stream, an' we're safe," said South, "for we kin reach the surface of these beds, and make a bee-line for the camp."

"Yes," said Cohoon; "but water too swift here. Go up higher."

They ascended the stream some distance, and then plunged into the Stygian water.

The scout was foremost with his child, while Cohoon swam behind.

Suddenly a floating object struck the Indian, and he felt a pair of arms encircle his thighs.

He tried to disengage the unseen 'thing,' which seemed a corpse, but the longer he toiled the more terrible grew the embrace.

Cohoon felt that the object was dragging him down, and he heard Kit loosen the stones on the opposite bank as he climbed up with his daughter.

The Indian struggled with all his strength to avert the doom that threatened him, and when on the eve of despair

the embrace suddenly relaxed, and but one hand retained its hold.

Then the Warm Springer started forward again, dragging the demon with him. He had lost his knife during his struggle in the water, and could not cut the dead man loose.

Once, while fighting for life in the middle of the stream, he thought he had discovered that his cold antagonist was a white man; but then, who could the white man be?

Panting he drew his fearful burden upon the bank and greeted Kit.

"What kept you, Cohoon?" asked the scout, in the lowest of whispers.

"Fight with dead man," was the Indian's reply. "Kit cut hand loose."

The scout drew his hunting-knife and felt for the hand.

A moment's quest enabled him to find the member, and when he ran his own hand over it he started back.

Cohoon heard the low ejaculation of surprise that fell from Kit's lips, and said:

"What matter, Kit? Who catch Cohoon in water?"

The reply was breathed into the Indian's ears by lips that touched it.

"Great Heavens, it's 'Van Harris; I know by a certain ring he wears—a ring 'Reesa gave him a year ago."

Then Cohoon whispered in return:

"Cut Cohoon's belt; but don't touch scout's hand. Mebbe he 'live!"

In silence the Indian's belt was severed, and the wet body was lifted from the ground.

"We'll go now, 'Reesa," said Kit, turning to his daughter again. "I had to cut a dead Indian loose from Cohoon."

He dared not tell her the truth, and as he started forward once more, Cohoon's finger touched his shoulder, and he heard two words fall from the painted lips, that sent a thrill of pleasure to his heart.

"He breathes!"

A few moments after leaving the river, the fugitives caught occasional glimpses of the stars, and all at once the discharge of a number of rifles struck their ears.

"The boys are after the Modocs," said Kit, pausing and waiting for Cohoon to come up. "Chief, shall we wait here till the fighting is over, or had we best break for the opening? Which course do you think best?"

"How near we to hole?" asked Cohoon.

"Oh, a matter of thirty yards, I reckon."

"Then run for hole."

A minute later Kit started forward again; but soon halted so suddenly that Cohoon unaware of his action brought up against him.

"What up?" queried the Indian.

"The Modocs have taken possession of the mouth of this passage, and are fighting our boys from thence."

The Warm Spring Indian gritted his teeth.

"How many Modocs?" he asked.

"Don't know, but I'll see."

The scout left Reesa with Cohoon, and crawled forward. But he soon returned, and reported five savages at the mouth of the corridor.

"We run through them!" said Cohoon.

But the scout, thinking of his daughter, hesitated.

"Father, arm me," she cried. "You know I can shoot."

The next moment Cohoon slipped a revolver into the girl's hand.

"White girl armed now," he said, "now we push through the Modocs."

"We will, heaven help us! It is the only path to liberty," said the scout. "When I say ready—"

"Quick!" interrupted Cohoon, in a tone of danger. "Quick, Kit, Jack, coming!"

The scout who was stooping for the purpose of crawling upon the besieged red-skins sprung to his feet as a torch shot around a rock, and revealed the redoubtable Jack at the head of a force of his braves.

He needed no further commands to dart forward, and the next moment he was among the savages at the mouth of the cave.

He dropped two before they were aware of the presence of foes, for they heard only the shout of the red reinforcements, and cleared the threshold unhurt.

Cohoon and 'Reesa were not far behind, but the savages had comprehended the true state of affairs before they could join the scout.

The mouth of the passage was obstructed by the bodies of Kit's victims, and Cohoon, discommoded by his burden, stumbled over one of the forms, and found himself grasped by three Indians before he could rise.

'Reesa sprung to the rescue, for the torches of the reinforcing party revealed the Indian's situation ; but a savage hurled her back, and she rose as Mouseh appeared upon the scene.

" At last I'll end the Modoc war !" she cried, and impulsively pulled the trigger as she thrust the muzzle of her revolver against the breast of Captain Jack.

But no report followed—alas ! the hammer had descended upon the portals of an empty chamber, and in the twinkling of an eye she found herself in the grip of the Modoc chief.

Then the new-comers hurled themselves upon the struggling Cohoon, who was soon overpowered.

He was picked from the ground, and yells of mingled rage and vengeance burst from the Indians' throats when they saw that he and Wiaquil the Klamath were identical.

But what of Kit South ?

His absence proclaimed his escape.

Once he sprung to the rescue of his child, but discovering that he could do nothing, had retired. But as he gained the starlight again, he shouted back :

" I'll come again, 'Reesa—never fear. They're too much for me now."

His daughter heard not the words ; but some of the savages did, and they felt that he had promised future succor.

They sprung after him, but soon returned empty-handed, and declaring that he had borne away the body of a man.

They spoke the truth, for Evan Harris lay unconscious across the ranger's shoulder.

" Now back to the bloody cave !" suddenly cried Captain Jack. " The false-face has been torn from the spy. Turn upon your heels, Modocs, to witness the punishment that Mouseh inflicts upon the dog that steals to his councils with lying words !"

He darted a fierce look upon Cohoon, whose eye did not quail the least, and the next moment turned upon his heel, followed by the executioners of his will.

Now all hopes of succor from the Klamath nation had been torn from the Modoc's heart. He saw that he had been completely hoodwinked by his worst enemies, and the events which had just transpired were transforming him into the demon incarnate.

CHAPTER X.

COHOON AND HIS ENEMIES.

THE band soon reached the main cave, in the center of which a fire burned brightly.

The scowl of vengeance still rested upon the Modoc's face, and his hands were clenched until the nails bruised the palms.

He had been the prey of deep thought during the return; he saw that successful resistance was not to be expected, and the determination to fall upon the troops, rifle in hand, then animated his breast. Arrow-Head, the Klamath, was too cowardly to help him, and it seemed that the hand of every red-man was against him.

He was the first to enter the cave, and he suddenly paused near the fire and fastened his eyes upon a figure that lay against a wall.

"What means that?" he asked, turning suddenly upon his chiefs.

Hooker Jim stepped forward.

"The white Modoc is dead," he said, glancing at the stiffened figure, clad in the easily recognized garments of Rafe Todd. "He hated the spies, and so he came to the cave to kill them. But the Warm Spring chief shot him from the river bank, and he run by Hooker and fell dead."

"He is really dead, then?"

"Dead! Hooker felt his heart. It can not beat with a bullet-hole through it."

A genuine sigh escaped the Modoc's lips. His best spy was dead.

"Then away with the white Modoc," he said. "He has done Mouseh much good ; but he was a bad, bad man. Pale girl," and he turned to 'Reesa South, "your painted beau is dead."

The scout's daughter did not reply, but a look of satisfaction beamed from her eyes.

"Girl glad?" said Jack.

"Why should I not be?" she asked, quietly looking up into his eyes. "He sent the Indians to our home. 'Twas his gold that drove the bullet to mother's heart, his gold that gave our cabin to the flames. Should I sorrow for his end?"

"No ; if he did all this, Mouseh will not regret his death."

Then the chief turned from 'Reesa and watched the warriors prepare Baltimore Bob for burial. He was wrapped in a great blanket, in whose folds a lot of basaltic stones was placed, and the whole borne to the river.

A few minutes later the burial party returned, and reported a fulfillment of their duty.

Nor did they report falsely, for they had flung the corpse into the stream, beneath the surface of which it disappeared like a cannon-shot.

"Now Mouseh punishes the painted liar," cried the chief, and the glance of his dark eye fell upon Cohoon.

"Cohoon is ready," was the undaunted reply, and with a firm step he strode into the center of the circle which the chieftain had formed. "Cohoon has fought the Modocs bravely," he continued ; "he has taken no prisoners ; he would not spare Mouseh were he in his power ; therefore, he expects no mercy at Mouseh's hands ; he will ask none."

He stood in the light of the fire, with head proudly erect, and arms pinioned to his side. Once while he spoke he glanced at 'Reesa, and that glance bade her as affectionate a farewell as his lips could have framed.

"Thus spies die !" said the chief, stepping toward the Warm Springer with cocked revolver. "The hunting-ground over our head needs another hunter and the deer wait by the river for Cohoon's coming."

A deadly silence followed the last word, and every breath was suspended.

The revolver crept upward, and just as it rested on a level with the doomed man's brain, a bullet knocked it from the Indian's hand!

Captain Jack uttered an exclamation of rage, and wheeled toward the spot from whence the shot seemed to come.

A fresh weapon glittered in his right hand—a weapon snatched from the grip of Scar-faced Charley.

His flashing eyes demanded to know who fired the shot; but he spoke not, and the warriors gave way as he strode forward.

But, suddenly, a figure leaped from the narrow corridor into which the chief looked for a solution of the mystery, and halted scarce a foot from the muzzle of his pistol.

The chiefs recognized the new-comer before the great Modoc, and when her name rung from every lip, he started back, and gazed from a safer distance into her face.

"Artena!" he cried, "what does all this mean? Did not the iron shell blow you to pieces? Chiefs, surely you do not see Artena?"

"Ah, Mouseh, Artena is not with the Manitou," said the Squaw Spy, stepping forward quickly, and touching the Modoc's arm. "The great shell blew her from the cave; but she has returned to tell Mouseh about the blue-coats."

All at once Jack started forward again, and took the girl's hand.

He never doubted her fidelity to him, and now that Rafe Todd was dead he could rule his chiefs concerning her retention as a spy, for his cause.

"But why did Artena shoot Mouseh's pistol from his hand when he was about to punish the liar?" queried the Modoc. "Let Artena answer that."

Seemingly startled by such a question, the girl shrunk from the Indian, and placed her hand upon her empty belt. She was unarmed; not even a knife glittered on her person.

"How could Artena shoot without a pistol?" she asked, "and why should she seek to save the enemies of Mouseh?"

Her reply astonished the Modoc.

"The big ranger has escaped the dark river," he cried,

turning to his warriors. "He is not far away, and then he added, in a lower tone: "trail him, hunt him down this night."

Almost instantly several Indians deserted the band, and Artena smiled faintly when they took their departure.

"Artena shall tell Jack about the blue-coats, but not now," continued the chief, turning away, and his eyes again fell on Cohoon, toward whom he walked.

"Cohoon has had time to sing his death-song, yet it has not passed his lips," he said. "This is not Mouseh's fault. Donald shot the pistol from his hands; but he will hit it no more."

The eyes of the Squaw Spy were riveted upon the Modoc, and, as his pistol crept up for the second time, she started forward and laid her hand on his blue-coated arm.

He looked down upon her, his whole frame quivering with smothered rage.

"What Artena want? There is time enough to speak when Mouseh has settled with the spy," and with the final word he tore his arm away, and glanced at a tall chief, who stepped to Artena's side.

"Artena would tell Mouseh this," she said, and the words sounded like icy water dropping upon red-hot steel; "this she would tell Mouseh, the war-chief of the Modocs. If he takes the life of Cohoon, she will bore his heart with a bullet, and tear his scalp from his head!"

Instantly the Indian dropped the pistol, and wheeled upon the girl.

He saw the flashing eyes, the pallid lips, and the tightly-clenched hands.

For several moments he did not speak. The chiefs surged nearer, but he waved them back with his pistoled hand, never once taking his eyes from the Squaw Spy.

"Artena is mad," he said, at length, after looking her in the eye. "She knows not what she says. Steamboat, take her."

He looked at the young warrior who had stepped to her side, and his red hands encircled her arms.

But she wrenched herself loose, displaying in the action a strength that astonished the spectators, and before Steamboat

Dick could secure her, she stood beyond reach, and his Spencer rifle was clutched in her hands.

"Artena's head is not cracked!" she cried, directing her words at Captain Jack. "She means just what she says. If Mouseh raises his revolver to Cohoon's head again, the Modocs shall be chiefless!"

Jack glanced from the girl to his tribe, then back again.

"Artena," he said, "is a Modoc, Cohoon is a Warm Spring dog. His forefathers fought ours long years ago. The tree of hatred has thrived between the two nations, and the river of death has watered its roots. She can not love the man who— Ha! what says Artena now?"

The Squaw Spy was a prisoner, for a savage had suddenly leaped through an opening in the ceiling, and encircled her with his long red arms. She gritted her teeth and struggled, but all to no purpose; the giant Modoc was too much for her, and she submitted, while the Indians clapped their hands in approval of their brother's deed.

Nor did the captor handle his prize decently. One hand suddenly flew to her throat, and, strangled until her face assumed a darker color than its own natural one, she became as limp as a cloth in his hands, and appeared senseless.

Captain Jack, in the ebullition of his wrath, permitted this, and there was but one in the whole assemblage who tried to resent the indignity.

This person was Cohoon!

He sprung forward with a cry of horror when he saw Artena's condition; but was confronted by Captain Jack, whose right hand hurled him back.

"There's some infernal treachery between these two," he cried, glancing at his braves. "Artena would not strike for Cohoon if he was nothing to her. Say—girl, what—"

He was flung aside by Cohoon's clenched hand, and, before he could recover, Steamboat Dick was hurled upon him, and Artena lay upon the spy's arm.

The severing of Cohoon's bonds was Reesa South's work!

Unable to control the spirit that suddenly swept over her, she had snatched a knife from the belt of a young savage who stood near, and liberated Cohoon before the astonished chiefs and braves could interpose a hand.

And she gained the spy's side unharmed, and, smiling over her triumph, faced the array of rifles and knives.

"Back!" yelled Jack, rising and throwing himself before his maddened braves, who were pressing forward. "Leave all this to me. This night we will rid ourselves of every enemy that infest this cave!"

Then he wheeled upon Cohoon, whose Spencer was leveled at his breast.

"What is Artena to Cohoon?" he cried.

The answer followed quickly upon the heels of the interrogative, and startled every one.

"His wife!"

The sentence roused Artena, and, starting up, she knocked the rifle from its level.

Cohoon tried to remedy the accident; but the whiz of an arrow prevented him.

He groaned; the weapon dropped from his hands, and, with a barbed shaft sticking in his side, he dropped upon his knees.

A wild yell greeted the result of the shot; but it was broken in twain by the Squaw Spy, who snatched the rifle from the ground, and, with a cry of defiance, threw herself before the man who had called her wife!

CHAPTER XI.

NEW YORK HARRY.

THE gray light of morning was revealing the camp of the United States troops when the sentry before General Alvin Gillem's head-quarters halted a stalwart Indian who, with aboriginal boldness, was stalking toward the door.

"What blue-coat stop Indian for?" demanded the red-man.

"For the simple reason that you have no business with the General."

Indian much talk with gold-star chief. He lookin' for Klamath."

"But I shall not disturb him on your account," said the sentry. "You can loiter about the camp till sunrise."

The Klamath did not move, but burst into a hearty cachination, decidedly English.

"So you thought I was an Indian, Tom Baird," he said. "Well now, that's a rich joke. Can't you tell old Kit South from a Klamath?"

"Kit South it is, upon my honor!" exclaimed the sentry. "Here, give me your hand; but don't tell the boys how you sold me."

The scout took the extended hand, and shook it heartily while he laughed.

"I reckon, Tom, you'll let me see Gillem now," he said, and as the sentry moved toward the tent, the curtains parted and a head was thrust forth.

"Well, well, Kit," said the voice of Gillem. "You do make an excellent Klamath. What's the news from Arrow-Head? But, come in, and we'll talk matters over while I dress."

Tom Baird stepped aside, and the ranger entered the General's tent.

Kit threw himself upon a blanket and burst into a fit of laughter.

"'Reesa's in a bad fix, and Cohoon's in a worser," he said; "but I must laugh when I think how readily Jack swallowed our story about Arrow-Head. You see, General, he had been itching to b'lieve such a thing for so long, that he took right to the tale we brought. But once thar, we stood on the edge of perdition, and I had to do a deed that went ag'in' my grain."

Gillem dropped his boot-straps, and looked up at the scout.

"While we war talkin' to Jack, in pops an Indian boy, and he war goin' to tell who we war; but I don't know how he knew the truth unless he see'd us fix up. But I sp'iled his story before he got started. I just caught him up, and I guess I let a spoonful o' blood out'n his breast. I didn't want to kill the little fellow; he looked as innocent as a lamb, but I hed to do it to save my own skin."

"I hope you may be forgiven for that blow," said the soldier, with a smile.

"I hup so, too, General; but what riles me, the red devils hev still got 'Reesa--Baltimore Bob, in particular."

"That fellow again?" queried Gillem. "He must be a demon, Kit."

"That's just what he is. When a white man turns Injun, Satan registers a new devil on his books."

"A white man, Kit? You don't mean that--"

"Yes, I do. Baltimore Bob is a white chap called Raf Todd, and then the scout detailed a history of the renegade's crime, and subsequent desertion. "You see, I knowed nothing of this when he came about our parts," he continued, "and he began cutting around 'Reesa. But, she wouldn't have any thing to do with him, for she was rather soft on a fellow named Harris," and there was a merry twinkle in the father's eye while he spoke the last sentence. "Finally, he insulted 'Reesa and I wanted to cowhide him. By Jehu! I would have skinned 'im alive, I guess; 'Van took it up, and one night they fought a duel with rifles along Lost River. 'Van hit the fellow somewhere, and he tumbled over the bank into the water. We saw him floating downstream, dead, as we thought. But he isn't dead. 'Van saw Jack unmask him the other day, and after that the white devil shot 'Van in the head."

"Is Harris dead?"

"No; I brought him off from the last fight, and he's in Cap. Jackson's tent now, nigh about as well as anybody. When Bob, or Rafe Todd, found that he wasn't dead, he put him into the clutches of their Curly-headed Doctor, with eye-orders to get him out o' the way. The medicine fool tried it, but 'Van took care of an advantage, and knocked the doctor down. Then he broke an' run, got into the river, was strangled, and Cohoon got him out when he was nigh about gone. I guess we'll never see Cohoon ag'in. They'll make short shrift of the brave red fellow. Where's Artena and Donald?"

Gillem shook his head.

"Their absence perplexes me. I never liked the idea of sending that girl among the Modocs. She walks into the jaws of death every time she enters the lava-caves. If the Modoc chiefs ever get a good chance at her--"

"Why, she's gone. But it puzzles me about Mack," said Kit. "If he got out of the river, he would have been hyar afore this, I think."

"Something startling may detain him. Recollect, he has friends to save."

"And I—I have a wife to avenge!" cried the scout, springing to his feet, all the anger of his nature aroused. "General I had a dream, during the short sleep I snatched in Jackson's tent, last night. It's too long to tell, but it amounted to this I killed the man who sent the red devils against my cabin—Rafe Todd. I don't b'lieve in dreams very much; but I dreamt this one over three times in an hour, and I know thar's something in it. If he don't deserve—"

The sentence was suddenly shortened by the appearance of the sentry, who announced that several soldiers were conducting a Modoc prisoner to head-quarters.

Gillem glanced at Kit and smiled, as he rose to his feet.

"We're decimating their ranks at the rate of one per week," he said. "This war is costing Uncle Sam a neat little figure."

"Yes," said Lava-Bed Kit. "It costs about two millions to kill a Modoc; half that sum to give one a flesh-wound. Reg'lars can't fight Indians in California."

"Please don't reflect upon the regulars, Kit," responded Gillem. "You know I won't argue with you on the question you have sprung; but let us take a look at the solitary captive of the whole army."

The two men left the tent, and greeted a sturdy sergeant and two privates who had halted before it with the captive Modoc.

This fellow, they said, had entered the camp with a whit rag streaming from his gun-barrel, and declared himself disgusted with the Modoc cause. He would fight no more agains the Government, and wished to be released on parole. His name, he said, was New York Harry, and his rank a sub-chief under the Modoc rebel.

General Gillem relieved him of his arms, a fine Spencer rifle, a brace of silver-mounted revolvers, and a bowie-knife, and released him on his word of honor.

"I will tell my men of you," he said, through Kit, who

acted as interpreter on the occasion, "and if you attempt to pass the lines, you will be shot dead."

The savage expressed himself fully satisfied with the restrictions, and, after delivering some important information concerning Jack, was allowed to depart.

Gillem and the scout watched the Indian a while, and then separated, after a brief conversation.

New York Harry sauntered about the camp and conversed with numerous scouts. He found his way to Colonel Mason's head-quarters, and was soon enrolled in the United States service as a scout. A new Spencer rifle and revolver were furnished him, and he was to lead a squad of soldiers to Jack's retreat at nightfall. He harbored a deadly hatred against the Modoc, and exhibited a fresh scar, which extended across his right cheek, as a mark of Jack's affection for his followers.

"Well, 'Van, do you think you can go with me to the Beds, to-night?"

"I do, Kit. I *am* going with you," replied the young man, who lay upon a pallet in the tent of Captain Jackson of the —th regular infantry. "I want to help snatch 'Reesa from the red cutthroats, to save Cohoon, if I can, and to settle accounts with Rafe Todd."

"You've got too many irons in the fire," said South, with smile. "Take a couple out, 'Van."

The young ranger shook his head.

"Not for Joe, or, rather, not for 'Van Harris," he said, returning the scout's smile. "If I burn any of those irons, it will be my own fault, Kit. We are going alone, I suppose."

"Yes; though there's one fellow who'd like to go along, I'm thinking!"

"Who is he—Mack?"

"Lord bless you, no!" exclaimed the scout. "Here it's sun-down almost, and Mack hasn't showed his face. Gillem's gettin' flustered about him, an' I mus' own that somethin' of that nature's troublin' me. We'll look for Donald, too, when we get to the Beds. But the fellow what would like to go with us is an Indian—a genuine Modoc."

"The fellow who surrendered this morning?" asked the ranger.

"That's the chap."

"Jackson was telling me about him to-day, and I wouldn't be surprised to learn that the fellow is a spy. And to think that Mason would commission him as a scout! I must say that our army officers are forgetting the lessons they learned in the rebellion."

"It looks that way," said Kit. "I've been watching the Indian nigh all day, but I've see'd nothing suspicious about him."

"Well, he may be in earnest. I'd like to see him."

"Then we'll walk out a bit. I want you to see Davis and Gillem afore we go back to the caves. Blast the luck! I wish our plot to kidnap Jack had succeeded. I know something now. That young Oregonian who come into camp the other day was Rafe Todd."

"He was. I learned enough from the Indians to satisfy me on that point," said 'Van Harris. "He lay behind a rock while you and Artena conversed with Gillem, and it was he who denounced the girl as a traitress. He beat her to the cave."

Kit South did not speak, but gritted his teeth with rage, and they left the tent.

The young ranger had completely recovered from his wound, and seemed much refreshed by his day's rest. He belonged to McKay's Lava-Bed Rangers; and had been of signal value to the service since the inauguration of the Modoc war. He had offered his services simultaneously with Kit South, and at once enlisted under the chieftainship of the Warm Spring hero.

Like the giant scout, he could speak the Modoc tongue without difficulty, and was well versed in the cunning toils of Indian warfare.

The scouts held brief conversations with the two Generals in Gillem's head quarters, and about seven o'clock took their departure.

"I'm not coming back this time without 'Reesa," said Kit, while he held Davis' hand.

"Nor I without a canceled account with Rafe Todd," chimed in the young ranger.

"You can't kill him!" said Kit, turning to the young

speaker. "I told yon about my dream. I b'lieve it now as firmly as I b'lieve I live. I'm going to kill that devil myself."

"Bring him alive into camp, Kit, and we'll hang him for killing the sergeant, at Fort Crook."

"Never mind, Gen'ral; I'll settle the army's bill against him when I settle mine."

A few minutes later the scouts left the officers, and, well disguised, hurried toward the outskirts of the camp.

"Why the Indian intends staying about to night after all," suddenly whispered Kit to his companion. "I thought Luke Davis, Dave Webb, and Sam Thatcher, war goin' to the beds with him."

"The Indian—where is he?" asked young Harris. "I want to see him."

"There he goes, now look, quick—he's turning—coming this way—going right toward the boys' tent."

The scout quickly drew his young comrade into a tent, near at hand, and, parting the curtains just the least, they watched the savage.

He was walking directly toward the Sibley, and was distinctly visible in the soft April gloaming.

His Spencer was slung on his back, and he walked rapidly, as though something on the other side of the camp demanded his attention.

Suddenly, when New York Harry had arrived opposite the tent, Evan Harris caught Kit's arm.

"Don't you know him?" he cried, looking up into the scout's face, excitedly.

"Know him—yes; he's a Modoc scoundrel."

"He is not," said the younger ranger. "His name is Rafe Todd."

The old scout started at the mention of the deserter's name, but shook his head.

"That won't do, boy. When did you see Rafe last?"

"Yesterday."

"Had he a scar on his face?"

"No."

"Well, this fellow has a scar on his cheek—a tremendous scar, too, and it's at least five days old. I think he is play-

ing some little game, but the boys are posted, and at the first sign of treachery, they'll put him out of the way forever. Come, we'll go, now."

They left the tent, but the young ranger could not take his eyes from New York Harry.

"You may reason soundly, Kit," he said, at length, "but I will bet my life that Rafe Todd stands in that fellow's moccasins."

"He can't," said the scout, quickly and confidently. "That scar says he is *not* Rafe Todd, and didn't I look him squarely in the eye when you lay about dead in Jack's cave, and see that his face was as smooth as your'n, barring his paint? And then that Indian is a better man—physically—than the white villain."

The youth did not reply to this argument; but his countenance told that he still adhered to his opinion regarding the identity of New York Harry.

CHAPTER XII.

A TURNING OF TABLES.

To acquaint the reader with Artena's sudden appearance before Cohoon's would-be-torturers, we must needs return to the bank that overlooked the interior of the cave.

For many minutes after Donald McKay's departure in search of the boat, which was intended to convey her from Jack's stronghold, Artena kept her eye fixed upon the sleeping spies and their surroundings. She felt suspicious of Baltimore Bob, indeed, she had reached the conclusion that he had recognized the two men, despite their paint and Klamath garments, and she looked for some coming treachery on his part.

Therefore, so intent upon these thoughts was the Indian's mind, that the footsteps that loosened a pebble and caused it to roll into the black water, did not disturb her in the least. True, the noise was scarcely distinguishable above the swash of the waves; but it was big with events.

A dark figure wearing a cavalry jacket and Indian leggings was crawling upon the watcher with the movements of the panther, and the look that shot from the dark eyes was indicative of the fiercest triumph and revenge, strangely commingled.

Once or twice the Indian—for an Indian the girls' foe undoubtedly was—paused and listened, as if he knew that Donald McKay was not far off; but he never took his eyes from his prey.

Suddenly crouching very near the ground, imitating the movements of the panther in every particular, he sprung upon the watcher, who was secured before she could comprehend her situation.

One of the scarlet hands prevented her from crying aloud, and down the bank with his captive the savage hurried.

He knew his path in the gloom, and avoided the numerous crags that projected riverward as dextrously as though he could see like the owl. By and by he took his hand from Artena's mouth, cautioning her at the same time not to utter a word, and at length executed a halt, in the midst of Stygian darkness.

He had bound the nether limbs of the Squaw Spy in the light of the fire beside which the spies slept, and he placed her on the ground, while he turned his attention to the kindling of a fire.

In this he succeeded, and the blaze told Artena that her captor was a gigantic young savage, named Hunter Phil.

She had known him for years; in truth, from girlhood—known him as a vindictive lover, who had persecuted her with his attentions without a moment's cessation, when she was in his presence. But she had not, until that hour of capture, encountered him for some time, and had begun to hope that some Union bullet had terminated his existence.

"Artena with Phil once more," said the Indian, turning from the fire and throwing himself before the girl, who sat on the stony floor of the little cavern. "Phil no let Jack catch her again, for he'd kill her for spying in his stony lodges for blue-coats."

"Then, what are you going to do with me?" asked the girl, anxiously, but with great calmness.

"Phil going to leave Modocs," was the reply. "Blue-coats whip 'em, by 'm by. Jack's cause lost, and Phil want to save his neck, for big General hang Jack and his braves. So, Phil leave cave when night come again, and Artena go with him to Arrow-Head."

"But blue-coat law take Phil there."

"Then Phil go to Feather river. Won't catch him there?"

"Ah! but they will," said the girl, with a smile at the Indian's fear of justice.

"Then Phil get in big ship, an' go out on ocean. If blue-coats follow him there, then he go to—" he paused and looked up into Artena's eyes—"to the devil!"

The girl laughed at the expression of triumph that sat enthroned upon the Indian's face. He had solved the difficult problem of ultimate escape, and was proud thereof.

"Does Phil think that Jack would kill Artena?" asked the girl, quickly returning to seriousness.

The Indian nodded.

"Kill her in minute! Don't he know that she Davis' spy? Hasn't Phil lain beside the big General's tent and heard Artena tell him about Jack? And Baltimore Bob came right from the camp after hearing Artena and Kit talking to Davis, and told Jack that she was a traitress. Ah, Artena, Jack knows all at last. You go with Phil now, eh?"

The girl nodded, and almost beside himself with joy, the savage drew his knife and severed her bonds.

Then she continued to converse with her dusky lover, until, completely hoodwinked by her cunning words, he was thrown off his guard, and never dreamed of treachery.

Without resistance, she possessed herself of his tomahawk, talking the while of their future life among the Klamaths, and all at once the weapon shot up into space, and as quickly and irresistibly descended upon the unprotected head of the red-skin!

It took a terrible blow to fell the giant; but Artena's arm was equal to the emergency, and with a groan, he sunk to the ground.

She did not wish to kill him, for to him, no doubt, she owed her life, and with throbbless heart, she bent over the stricken lover, and felt his pulse. For a moment it beat to

the ratio of one hundred beats per minute, and then they lessened until they ceased altogether.

Hunter Phil was dead!

Quite assured of this, the Squaw Spy rose to her feet, and once more possessed herself of her own weapons. Now she would return to the bank, where Donald, no doubt, waited for her, and wondered at her absence. She knew that Phil was not aware of the ranger's presence: his words had told her this; and she was too far remote from the bank to hear the shots that broke the stillness there a while after her departure. Thoroughly acquainted with the intricacies of the Lava-Beds, Ardena thought that she could return to the spot without difficulty, and left the dead lover's cave on her mission.

But she missed the proper corridor, and followed one which led her to a contemplation of the scene which was transpiring in Jack's cave—the arraignment of Cohoon as a spy.

She watched it from the shadow of a lava-crag, with an interest bordering on terror, and when the Modoc's arm was lifted to take the Warm Springer's life, by a well-directed pistol-shot she disarmed the executioner, and then fearlessly showed herself, as the reader has already witnessed.

Immediately after shooting the pistol from Jack's hand, she flung her weapons into the deeper gloom, deeming it policy to deny the act, which was ascribed to McKay by the Indians.

What followed her surrender is described in chapter ten, so far as it goes, and now we resume the thrilling narrative.

Cohoon lay on the ground, like one dead; but he was still imbued with life.

The arrow had produced a senseless state, so nearly akin to death as to deceive the Indians, and they glared fiercely upon the youth whose empty bow told that he had sped the fatal arrow.

"Here, boy," and the speaker, Captain Jack, turned upon the youth. "Here, I want you, I say."

Several chiefs pushed the youth forward, and he soon found himself lifted from the ground by Mouseh's strong arms.

"Curse your little heart!" cried the chief. "You've pun-

ished the man whom I alone had the right to punish. Now to the spirit-land I send you. Yon lava-wall will be reddened by your blood, and may your fate be a warning to future self-installed executioners."

He raised the youth above his head, as he uttered the last sentence, and darted a quick look at Artena, who, with ready rifle, stood over her lover, her eyes fixed upon the youth, so speedily devoted to death.

A moment of breathless suspense followed, and then the Indian boy left the chief's grasp.

But his body did not strike the stony wall.

No! it struck a wall of flesh and blood, and Artena and 'Reesa South were hurled ten feet backward by the strange weapon!

"Secure them!" cried Jack, pointing to the stricken girls with an air of triumph, and several braves snatched thongs from their girdles and sprung to the task.

The Indian's invention had baffled his foes, and the hurling of the youth against them was an action unlooked-for by every occupant of the cave.

The force of the body was absolutely irresistible; it flew from Jack's hands like a thunderbolt, and after prostrating the girls, it struck the foot of the wall beyond, and quivered there like a piece of raw liver.

Jack's victory was greeted with wild shouts of approbation, and he stepped forward quietly and secured the Spencer which had fallen from Artena's hands.

Then he stooped over Cohoon, and smiled faintly when he looked up at his braves again.

A moment later, the Warm Spring chief opened his eyes, and, with the assistance of his stern captor, rose to his feet.

His hands had been lashed to his side, but his nether limbs were free, and he looked around upon the scene.

Neither Artena nor 'Reesa had recovered from the attack. Side by side they lay, like corpses, in the light of the fire, and when the spy's gaze fell upon them, he shot a look of vengeance at Jack.

"Dead?"

The question was quite natural, for the young red ranger

could not see the girls' bonds, which the position of their bodies hid.

"Dead are Artena and the white girl," answered the Modoc, to see what effect such words would have upon the ranger, and also to torture his inmost soul.

A tinge of pain quivered Cohoon's lips, and the lurid light of a storm flashed in his dark eyes. That light warned more than one Indian, and the clicking of rifle-locks again broke the silence.

"Who else, then?" demanded the ranger, and he moved forward an inch.

The lying answer accorded well with the torture which the chief's first words had inflicted.

"This hand," cried Jack, stretching forth his right hand. "It sent Cohoon's traitress—"

The snapping of cords interrupted the sentence, and the next moment the spy was among his enemies! Jack saw the veins on his forehead swell to enormous size; but the storm burst before he could prepare to receive it.

The strength of a Sampson slept in the ranger's muscles, and he leaped among the Modocs with a short, sharp cry, closely allied to the vengeful sound that often emerges from the panther's throat.

Captain Jack received a blow from the Spencer, which the madman wrenched from his grip, and then the weapon was stained with other blood.

His sudden onslaught nonplused the Indians. They dared not shoot, for their own brethren were likely to receive the balls, and only those nearest Cohoon could get a sight of him.

He cleared a path for his daring feet.

Like Simon Kenton, among the savages of early Ohio, he fought his way to the river bank, and then disappeared!

But not uninjured!

His escape from death seemed miraculous. It was his sudden onslaught that saved him. It confused the savages, and almost in the twinkling of an eye he was gone.

They could swear that his trail was marked with his own blood, and when they returned to their chief, who was recovering from the spy's attack, it was to tell him that his foe would never cross his path again.

This brave had sunk his knife into the scout's side ; that one had shot him in the back as he fell into the stream, and a third had crushed one shoulder with a clubbed carbine.

Not a savage could be found who had not inflicted some wound upon the brave ranger, and amid the bestowal of self-praise, Jack rose to his feet and pointed to the two captives still remaining in his hands.

"Scar face," he said, "take them to the little spring cave, and let the eyes of three of my best braves regard them until I command further."

Scar-faced Charley sprung to his task, and with the assistance of four braves whom he selected from the band, the two helpless captives were borne from the cave.

The chieftain was not in the humor to carry out his plans of punishment at present. He pressed his hand to his head, but quickly removed it, and saw it covered with blood.

"Look!" he cried, putting forth the gory member. "Mouseh's blood is flowing. Come, Modocs, swear that for every drop that falls from his head, a blue-coat shall die!"

Then the cave resounded with shouts of vengeance ; and stepping toward the wall, with his own blood the murderer of Canby traced the outlines of a gallows on the gray stone.

Then he turned to his braves, but spoke not.

They read the significance of the horrid design, and swore, for the hundredth time, to die with rifles in their hands.

Some kept their oaths ; but how Jack and others kept theirs, the reader of the Modoc war has seen.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRAITOR'S FLIGHT.

"PALE-FACES stay here till Harry see if path clear. Jack's spies may be near."

The speaker was the individual known as New York Harry, who had surrendered to the troops on the morning of Kit South's return to camp, and he addressed the three men whom

he had led to the lava-beds, for the purpose, as he averred, to surprise a small detachment of Modocs.

"Now look here," said Sam Thatcher, one of the trio, who had been warned by keen Kit South. "You're not going alone. I'm going to crawl for'ard with you, and by hokey! if I see a suspicious move on your part, I'll send a ray of starlight through your head.

The Indian did not reply, and submitted to the border-man's company, with ill-humor plainly visible in his dark eyes.

"Now, stay hyar, boys, an' keep eyes an' ears open," said Thatcher, and as the guide, impatient to be off, moved slowly on, he added. "This chap's up to something—something devilish; I feel it away down in my boots."

Then the twain pushed forward together, and soon disappeared.

Ever and anon Harry would pause and listen intently, but not a sound reached his ears. The stillness of the tomb brooded over the fortresses of the renowned Modocs, and the stars shed a strange light upon the death-traps of lava.

Sam Thatcher kept his eyes fastened upon his guide. He knew that Kit South never suspicioned any one without cause, and when he told him to watch Harry, he knew that treachery was in the air.

Suddenly the Modoc paused and turned his head.

"Hunter!" he whispered, and with cocked revolver, Thatcher moved to his side.

"Well—heavens!"

The exclamation was not spoken in a loud voice; the hand of the Indian prevented this, for it suddenly closed over the Californian's mouth, and he fell to the earth with the words dying on his lips.

New York Harry held a bloody knife in his hand, and Sam Thatcher, the scout of five-and-twenty years, lay dead at his feet!

Quickly the scalp was jerked from the dead man's head, and with an ejaculation of triumph, the murderer turned toward the remaining border-men.

He gained an elevated spot and looked down upon the couple, waiting, ignorant of Thatcher's doom, for his return.

For a moment the Modoc contemplated them, then deliberately cocked a large navy revolver, and rested it on a shining rock.

No compunctions of conscience arrested the murderous design; the trigger was drawn, and one of the hunters dropped like a stricken bullock, without a cry or groan.

The last one, Luke Davis, looked up and caught a glimpse of the shining pistol-barrel. Instantly he raised his carbine, but the Indian sent another ball from the rock, and the hunter dropped on his knees, then prone upon the ground—dead.

The scalping operation, as in Sam Thatcher's case, followed the consummation of treachery, and loaded with the arms of the murdered men, New York Harry disappeared among the gray rocks.

Kit South's warning had availed them naught; the hand of the traitor was too swift for Thatcher's eye. Had the Lava-Bed ranger stood in his shoes, the result might have been an entirely different one.

The Indian soon disappeared below the surface of the lava formations, and found himself in a high-ceiled corridor, whose sides he could touch with his hands. He seemed familiar with its dubious windings, for he pushed forward with alacrity, and surprised a score of Modocs in a large cave, almost two miles from the spot where he had entered the honey-comb.

"Mousch missed Harry," said the Modoc chief, greeting the Indian. "Where he been?"

"To the camp of the blue-coats," was the reply, in the Klamath tongue, for New York Harry had spent many years among the Klamaths, and therefore had acquired their language almost to the entire exclusion of his own. "General going to send troops after Mousch to-morrow. He give Harry guns and pistols—see!"

He thrust the weapons forward, and in the action exposed the trio of scalps that hung at his belt—a black, a brown and a sandy scalp.

"Where get these?" and a number of savages sprung forward with cries of delight, as their chief put the interrogative.

"From their owners!" was the reply, and the story of his treachery fell from the Indian's lips.

The red rebels listened to it, highly pleased, and at the conclusion clapped their approval.

"Where white Indian?" asked Harry, sweeping the crowd with the keenest of sloe-black eyes.

"Dead!" said Jack, laconically.

"Dead?" echoed New York Harry.

"Dead and in the black river. Jack glad he's gone. Good spy, good scout; but a very dog!"

"Then where girl?" questioned the traitor.

"Oh, she in cave. Kit and Cohoon get away from Mouseh; but Artena still in his fingers."

"Good. The red girl is an accursed snake, and she should die."

"She shall die!"

"Harry go now, if Mouseh has nothing for him to do," said the spy, after a long silence, during which Jack had been busy with his thoughts.

The Modoc raised his head.

"Harry done well," and here the chief's eye fell upon the scalps. "He be Mouseh's spy now in place of the white Indian."

"Mouseh," and the speaker stepped nearer the chief rebel, "Harry take three scalps to-night—the scalps of three brave men. Now, he asks a favor of you."

"Speak," said Jack. "Harry is brave; he done much to-night."

"He wants the pale girl now. Long ago he saw her in her lodge on Lost River, and loved her pretty face."

"If Mouseh gives pale flower to Harry, he will not leave the caves?"

"Not while a Modoc lives to fight the blue-coats!"

"The pale girl is Harry's. What will he do with her?"

"Take her to the little cave which Mouseh knows is Harry's."

"It is well. But when the day comes, meet us here. As you say, the blue-coats will come to-morrow, and we must meet them."

"I will be here," said the spy. "When New York Harry turns on Mouseh, may the Great Spirit strike him with His bolts of fire."

Then the Indian turned and glided from the cave as noiselessly as he had entered.

He hurried away as though some important errand demanded immediate attention, and a few minutes later he confronted the three guards who stood before the cavern that contained Artena and our whiter heroine.

A brief conversation with the guards enabled him to step into the lighted place, and he confronted the captives with an exclamatory salutation.

During the day just passed the imprisoned twain had slept but little, although nature needed repose. The phantom of doom that hovered over their heads served to keep their eyes painfully open, and their thoughts were not of an enviable nature. Their guards had been as reticent as statues concerning the designs of Mouseh against their persons, but the women felt that at any moment the messenger of death might arrive from the chief, and they would greet him with open eyes—with every sense alive, keenly so.

'Reesa sprung to her feet when New York Harry's exclamation fell upon their ears; but Artena remained on the couch and looked searchingly up into his eyes.

"So," said 'Reesa, "Jack has sent for us at last."

"No. Harry not take captives to Mouseh," was the quick reply, and there was an air of self-triumph in his mien. "The cave prisoners are to be separated."

"No! no!" and 'Reesa sprung to Artena. "Do not tear us apart."

"The white girl is unfit to mate with the red traitress," said Harry, stepping forward and grasping 'Reesa's arm. "Jack give you to New York Harry, and you go with him now. White Indian dead, you see."

"Yes, and I thank Heaven for it," cried the scout's daughter. "Artena, he shall not—"

Before she could finish her sentence the Indian jerked her from the Squaw Spy, and started back.

"Give her back to me!"

The cry sprung from Artena's lips, and with the agility of the jungle-tiger, she leaped from the couch, knife in hand.

But planting his feet firmly on the ground, the Indian met the charge, and dexterously knocked the knife aside as it descended.

Then, before Artena could recover, he clutched her throat, and hurled her with all his might back upon the couch.

"Is this the way you watch your captives?" he demanded, turning to the guards who had watched the brief combat with bated breath, and ready weapons. "Here, take the knife, and see that the scarlet tigress has no more arms secreted upon her person. Mouseh shall hear of this if you don't watch his captive closer."

With the last word he glanced at Artena, lying motionless on the skins, then strode past the abashed sentries, and turned into the first corridor that greeted his left hand.

"White girl's Harry's captive," he said in a low tone, addressing the burden that lay across his arm. "What does she say now? Surely she recollects the Indians who used to lay flowers on her door-sill on Lost River. Has the girl forgotten New York Harry? New York Harry—ha! ha! ha!"

But 'Reesa South made no reply, and after an observation in the dark, the Indian uttered an exclamation.

His captive was asleep.

Had her ears been on the alert she might have recognized the voice in the laugh that rung through the gloom.

"This is the fifth passage," said Harry, suddenly pausing before what his band told him was the mouth of a subterranean corridor. "I missed Doctor Frank among the chiefs, and may be that the fool has played me false. I'll see while I'm here, for I'm never coming back to this spot again. Wonder what Jack would say to hear that! But," as he deposited his captive on the floor and ignited several lucifer matches by striking them against the wall, "I've had enough of this war, and when an Indian can save his neck, he's a fool if he doesn't."

For a moment the matches burned blue, and then began to reveal the interior of the cave.

Slowly a dark object on the floor grew into shape, and the Indian started back when he recognized it.

It was the figure of an Indian, and the necklace of claws and snake's teeth that encircled the swollen and putrid neck, proclaimed him a medicine-man.

"That's enough," said Harry, turning from the bloated carcass to his prize. "Some strong medicine has killed even a doctor," and with this he left the cave.

He depended in a great measure on the guidance of his band, for eyes could not avail aught in the cimmerian gloom and at last he paused beside a narrow torrent that pushed its way over many a rugged rock.

Overhead the stars shone with all the beautiful luster of planets, and a fresh, cool night-breeze fanned the faces of the twain.

"I must cross this infernal river," murmured the Indian, suddenly turning his face up-stream. "And only a short distance up here I can cross on a natural bridge made for devils—for the spirits of the Modoc's evil band."

He took two steps forward when he suddenly halted, and grew into a statue on the shore.

One hand covered 'Reesa's lips, the other the hilt of a knife.

Something had dropped into the water from above—a lava pebble; but who had loosened it?

He cast his eyes up at the stars, but they had been blotted out of existence, at least to his orbs of vision.

Somebody was squeezing his person through the hole in the basaltic ceiling!

There was no doubt of this.

Suddenly New York Harry started forward, knife in hand.

But he paused a second later, for a man had dropped upon the shore—a man whom he could almost touch with his outstretched arm. And the aperture was darkened again.

"All right," whispered the man, in a cautious tone. "The coast is clear."

The Indian started, and hugged the black wall with his beautiful captive. He dared not retreat, for the loose pebbles would betray him.

Then he saw two other figures join the first, and after a short council all glided away—down the river.

New York Harry drew a breath of relief, and resumed his journey once more.

"If I wasn't going away for good to-night," he murmured, "I'd spoil the plans of them three pale faced dogs. Perhaps Mousch will discover before day that Donald McKay is not dead—that he still tramps the lava-beds, and that with Kit South and this pale girl's dog of a lover. Let them go.

New York Harry is done mixing in their affairs; he wouldn't turn back now to save the whole Modoc nation!

The next moment he reached the foot of a strange bridge, that spanned the stream with a single arch.

To the person acquainted with the wondrous interior of the lava-beds, the mention of this bridge will occasion no surprise. The great convulsion of nature that cast the *locals* of our story into such a horrid mold, fashioned the bridge, as the Modocs believe, for the passage of evil spirits across the stream, and therefore no Indian had the hardihood to approach the spot.

But "desperate diseases need desperate remedies." None but a giant could stem the torrent and gain the opposite bank by swimming, and the bridge was the only avenue of escape that presented itself to the traitor.

He secured a new hold on the girl, and gripped the blade of the knife with his teeth, as he climbed upon the structure and advanced.

It took the cunning of his right hand to steady him.

All at once he stopped and crouched to the stones, with a heart suddenly stilled by terror.

A living object was on the bridge before him, but whether man or beast he could not tell.

It was a moment of indescribable suspense.

The traitor, without knowing the nature of his foe, would not advance.

But he must cross the river; freedom, safety, lay beyond the further bank.

At last he started forward again.

No noise.

Perhaps, after all, his senses had deceived him.

A step further.

Ah! there was an enemy on the bridge, for the traitor felt a hand close on his throat.

It was the hand of an Indian!

New York Harry started up, dropping 'Reesa on the bridge as he did so, and tried to cope with his still unseen antagonist!

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE EVE-OF EXECUTION.

NEW YORK HARRY, as the reader knows, recognized the trio that dropped through the opening to the bank of the underground river.

They were Kit South, Evan Harris, and the indomitable chief of the Warm Spring Indians, McKay.

When last the reader encountered the latter, he was leaping into the river after shooting the red villain who was attempting to murder Kit and Cohoon, disguised as Klamath runners, and asleep in Jack's cave.

Fortunately, the balls of the savage did not injure him, and his strong arms stemmed the current, which was not so powerful as those of several other streams running through the lava-beds.

But he was borne far down-stream before he reached the opposite bank, and after dragging himself in the water, he lay exhausted upon the wet stones for several hours. Many times he caught the glimmer of torches that sought to reveal him to his foes; but their light did not penetrate the gloom that enveloped him, and so he escaped discovery.

He felt that his first shot had proved fatal, and congratulated himself that he had rid the world of one hateful excrescence—Baltimore Bob.

For in the person of the would-be assassin who bent over Cohoon, he recognized the white deserter; but was not aware that Rafe Todd and Baltimore Bob were identical.

Bob would have a motive for slaying the spies. No doubt he had penetrated their disguises, but could not convince Jack of their true character. Therefore he would slay them himself, and after the deed he would convince Mouseh that two spies had paid the penalty attached to such a venture as theirs.

"I'm not going back to camp till I see what has become of Artena," muttered McKay, with determination. "I'm sat-

isfied that the girl wouldn't leave me of her own accord, and I don't see how an Indian could take her off 'thout 'sturbin' me. But I know what I can do. I can get out o' this and hunt one o' the boys up, and lead him back to Gillem with the news. I'll do it."

An examination of his revolvers proved that the waterproof cartridges had sustained their reputation in his battle with the waves; but he had been obliged to drop his carbine, in order to save his own life.

A great many tortuous windings brought him to daylight, but when his eyes greeted it, he paused and shook his head.

He dared not leave the lava-caves and search for his scouts during the day—so he accepted the situation and waited for darkness.

It came at last, and the captain of the scouts gained the outer crust of the lava beds, and inaugurated the search for his men. Even under the cover of darkness this service was extremely hazardous; but he possessed information which must be conveyed to the Union General before the next advance. At length the chief found one of his men, who was at once relieved from duty and dispatched to the camp with the important intelligence.

"I may await your return here, I may not," he said to the messenger, before dismissing him. "Something might turn up to call me away, so, if you find me missing on your return, don't be alarmed."

He took up the scout's position, and a few minutes later was startled by a shot to his right.

"That means something," he murmured, and as he vacated his spot, for the purpose of inquiring into the noise, he was startled again by two more pistol discharges in rapid succession.

These were the shots that consummated New York Harry's treachery.

The last shot told the half-breed that they were not signals, for a death-cry reached his ears, and rapidly, but with caution, he neared the fatal spot.

He found the scalped bodies of the hoodwinked scouts, and was turning away, when a peculiar but not unfamiliar sound caused a halt.

Somebody else had been attracted thither by the three death-shots.

Who could it be but Indians?

Noiselessly the scout crawled behind a rock, and with ready weapons awaited the new-comers, for there seemed to be two.

The stars shone dimly upon the Lava-Beds, yet he could distinguish objects at the distance of several paces, and when the foremost of the new-comers came in sight, the scout, seeing at once that he was not a Warm Spring Indian, drew back with his knife, but did not strike.

The voice of the foremost man addressing his companion saved the lives of both.

Then McKay spoke in a whisper:

"Kit?"

The figures paused, and the next minute the chief had joined his rangers.

"The boys ar' dead," said Kit South. "I told Thatcher to watch that Indian; but Harry war too much for them. I just want to git a hold on him now. Sam and I war in 'the war' together under Canby, and Jehu! now I want to kill the greaser who played traitor, and then shot him."

A brief conversation—in which the parties exchanged personal narratives—followed, and they resolved to return to the lava caves, and free Cohoon and the two women from the Indians' power.

"So my dream won't come true," said Kit South, dejectedly, "for you say you killed Rafe. Well, I'm glad on it, now. Do you think he and New York Harry ar' the same, eh 'Van?"

Van Harris smiled, but did not reply. The argument was against him now, and the scout saw that he did not like to acknowledge it.

"Well," continued Kit, "I'll consider Harry Rafe Todd when I catch him, and treat the red devil accordingly."

The trio vacated the spot, and in due time found themselves beside the underground torrent, and within ten feet of the very man they were hunting—the very girl, too.

But they knew it not, and, guided by McKay, hurried downstream toward the Bloody Cave, which, within the last

forty-eight hours, could lay additional claim to the appellation.

The mission of the three men was dangerous in every sense of the term, and their movements told that they knew this.

Ever and anon they were compelled to pause and permit Indians to flit by like dark-robed specters; but they did not put forth a hand to take a life, for the death-cry might prove the harbinger of their own doom.

The scouts were preparing for the coming day. Captain Jack knew that the great guns of his white adversaries would open upon him with the rising of the sun, and his braves were hastening to stations already selected by his military eye.

The rescuers spoke not as they glided along, and at last they gained the elevation from whose summit McKay and Ardena had looked into Bloody Cave.

"I thought we'd take a peep into the lion's lair, first," whispered Donald to Kit, who crept at his side, young Harris having been left at the river to watch for foes. "I think we'll hardly—ha! the lion is at home."

The exclamation was called forth by the presence of Jack, alone in the cave.

He stood erect with arms folded upon his breast, and eyes fastened on the gallows which lately in the presence of his nation, he had traced on the wall.

"Heavens! what a fine chance to end the Modoc war," said Kit South, and his hand involuntarily crept to his revolver. "But it won't do to drop him."

"No," said McKay regretfully. "We must let the greatest devil in these parts go scot free. But if we catch him alone in one of these dark halls we'll end his days."

"That we will; but look, Mack, he's going to leave us. No, he sees some one—there!"

The chief had turned to greet a young Indian who had just crossed the threshold of the wide corridor.

"Now listen," said McKay, and the scouts poked their heads forward a degree.

"What brings Boston John to Mouseh?" questioned the Modoc chief, not relishing the disturbance.

"Rattlesnake says that the red star has climbed the horizon," answered the trembling brave.

His words caused the chief to start, and a gold watch was drawn from his bosom.

"Ha! 'tis near day!" exclaimed Jack, returning to its place of concealment the memento of some butchered blue-coated boy. "Artena's time has come!"

Then he glanced once more at the pictured gallows, motioned the boy away, and followed in his footsteps.

"He'll guide us to Artena now," said McKay, touching the border-man's arm.

"And to 'Reesa, for where Artena is there will we find my child."

"Yes, yes. We follow Jack now, though he leads us into the jaws of death. We can't get around this cave and catch him on the other side; we must run through it.

A low whistle called Evan Harris from his duty, and the next minute the trio flitted across the cave, and entered the corridor where Jack had disappeared.

The danger of their undertaking was apparent now. At any moment the hunted chief might turn upon them in the darkness, and dispatch all three before an injury could be inflicted upon him.

But Captain Jack did not think of foes on his trail; he was intent upon doing the deed promised at the rising of Mars—the execution of Artena.

Already a spirit of mutiny existed in the Modoc ranks. The Cottonwood branch of the tribe, containing such warriors as Hooker Jim, Scar-faced Charley, and Shack Nasty Jim, were loud in their expressions of disapproval of some of Jack's actions, chief among which was his leniency toward Artena.

After committing her to the guardianship of Scar-face, the braves exacted an oath from him that she should die at the rising of the planet of war.

His appearance before the guards was greeted with guttural exclamations of triumph, and boldly the chief crossed the threshold and startled the Squaw Spy with his voice.

"Artena ready to die?" he asked.

The spy looked around upon the occupants of the cave, and then riveted her eyes upon the rebel.

"Ready," she answered, seeing no pity in his dark eyes, for no doubt he had at last reached the conclusion that she was the spy, declared by his warriors.

"How would she die?"

As he spoke, the Indian held forth his hands, in one of which lay a pistol, in the other a knife.

Artena's eyes fell to the weapons, and the death of silence filled the cavern.

"Reesa isn't there!" said Kit South, with a groan, at this juncture. "Where in the name of mercy is my child?"

"We'll find out directly, Kit," said McKay, without moving his eyes from the scene in the cave. "Look! the girl takes the knife!"

Sure enough, the arm of the Squaw Spy had left her side, and was pointing to the shining blade in Jack's right hand.

The following moment the Modoc thrust the pistol in his belt, and stepped forward with uplifted knife.

"Shall he kill her?" whispered Kit.

"No!" and McKay's lips closed determinedly over the little monosyllable.

"He is going to make the attempt."

"Then the Modocs shall not boast of a chief to-morrow."

The last speaker was Evan Harris, and his revolver, like Kit South's carbine, covered Captain Jack's head.

"Hold your fire till I give the word," said McKay, "and when you do touch the trigger, mind that you don't drop the gal."

CHAPTER XV.

NEW ARRIVALS AT DEVIL'S BRIDGE.

THE three rangers held their breath, and kept their eyes upon the striking tableau in the cave.

They waited for the further lifting of the knife that glittered in the scarlet hand of the Modoc brigand; then they

would drive their bullets to his brain, and rescue Artena from "durance vile."

The Indian guards had turned from their posts to witness the execution, and a fierce smile of approval played with their lips.

"Artena goes to the Great Spirit now," said Jack, suddenly breaking the silence. "She will never—"

He was not permitted to finish the sentence, for, with a suddenness that startled every one, the Squaw Spy sprung upon him and wrested the knife from his hands.

He reeled backward with an exclamation of rage, and barely escaped the blow she aimed at his heart.

Then Artena whirled upon the guards, who tried to seize her after she had crossed the threshold of her prison!

"Catch her!" yelled Jack, as he recovered his equilibrium, and leaped forward, revolver in hand.

But the guards had anticipated his commands, and were pursuing the flying woman in the gloom, and over the loose rocks that strewed the floor of the passage.

By and by the three guards returned—empty-handed.

"Where's Artena?" asked the chief, angrily.

"The spirits of Wonemoc land took her off."

Captain Jack's lips curled with a contemptuous sneer.

"Dogs that will let a woman outrun them are not fit to live!" he cried, and the next instant one of the guards dropped, with a bullet in his brain.

The others looked to their weapons; but the murderer was too quick for them; one fell before he could draw his weapon, the other with the pistol in his hand.

"Thus I deal with dogs!" cried Jack, looking down upon his victims. "The warriors shall hear that they freed Artena, and that I discovering their treason, shot them. The traitors even will applaud me; the act will help make us truer brothers."

Then he sprung over the dead with the name of the Squaw Spy on his lips, and the cave was untenanted by the living.

He knew where more than one red warrior lay, and he was determined that Artena should not escape.

But where was the flying girl? Let us see:

Springing from the cave she ran into the arms of Donald

McKay. She would have shrieked, no doubt, but the ranger's hand closed over her mouth, and his lips touched her ear.

" 'Tis Mack, girl," he whispered, "and the boys are with him. Quick! to the left," and a moment later the Indians darted past.

The quartette found themselves in a corridor whose floor was devoid of obstructions, and through the gloom they hurried with hasty feet.

"Hold!" suddenly cried Kit South, touching McKay's arm. The party halted.

"I want to know where my gal is?" said the scout. "Artena, what do you know about her?"

Then, in low whispers, the Squaw Spy related the separating of herself and Kit's child by New York Harry.

"Where do you suppose he took her?"

"Artena does not know."

For a moment the scout was silent.

"He does not mean to stay with Jack any longer, I'm satisfied of this," he said, then. "I know that Indian—the sharpest of all the Modocs. He sees that Jack's time is drawing to a close, and I'll wager my rifle that he's going back to his old haunts with 'Reesa—back to the Klamaths."

"Then we must hunt him above ground," said Evan Harris.

"Yes, and the sooner we get out o' this the better."

"We must cross the river, but where?"

"At the Devil's Bridge," answered the scout. "You won't find an Indian within a hundred yards of the spot. Why, several years ago, I couldn't get Cohoon to put his foot on it, and as we were compelled to cross the stream, he plunged in, and I had to risk my life to save his."

When Kit spoke the name of the Warm Spring spy, a hand fell softly on his arm; but the owner thereof did not speak until he had finished.

"Speak gently of Cohoon," said a voice in the darkness. "He is dead."

"Who killed him?"

"The Modocs; they shot him full of holes as he jumped into the river."

The gritting of teeth was heard in the corridor.

"If ever we git out o' this, girl, we'll pay the Indians for those shots," said the scout; "but we've got to be going. This hall leads to the river—I know it by the rough walls."

Then the march was commenced, Donald McKay in the van, and admirable progress was made until the ranger suddenly brought up against a stone wall.

"Perdition!" he hissed, turning upon his followers, "the corridor ends here."

"Then we're lost!"

"Yes. In the gloom, I have turned from the true trail. But, hark! we are near the river! I hear the water dashing over the rocks."

Then every voice grew still, and the party listened to the sound of the underground river.

"There must be an outlet to the river," said young Harris, breaking the silence. "I believe that a path leads from this cavern straightway to its brink."

The walls of the little cavern were examined, but not a single indenture rewarded the searchers.

"We must get out of here," McKay said, with stern determination. "We are not twenty rods from Devil's Bridge, and once across it, we are safe. The ceiling may be perforated."

"True! Lucky thought!" cried Kit South; and the next moment he was running his tomahawk over the roof of the cave.

"Here is a hole," he said, suddenly; "but I can barely reach it."

"It leads up the river—I feel it," said Harris; "but how can we reach it?"

A way by which the hole in the ceiling could be utilized was soon found.

Kit South, supported by McKay's herculean shoulders, clambered into the opening, and announced that he was in a corridor which led to the river.

This was joyful news indeed, and he drew the young ranger and Ardena from the cavern. It then took the united strength of all to draw the immense form of McKay into the corridor, and for a moment they paused to recover breath.

A piercing shriek broke the silence, and startled every one.

"That was 'Reesa's voice, by Heaven?" cried Kit South, springing forward; but McKay held him back.

"The black path may be full of holes," he said, admonishingly. "Wait! we'll light the way."

"Then be quick about it, Mack. My gal's in danger."

The half-breed stripped his hunting-jacket from his burly form, and wrapped one sleeve about a knife. A lucifer match ignited the improvised torch, and, with a bright glare above his head, he started forward.

All at once Donald McKay paused on the edge of the corridor, and turned to his companions.

"Look!" he said, holding the torch in a position that enabled all to see the Devil's Bridge.

They did look and beheld two men—Indians—struggling like demons on the rocky arch, which, every second, they threatened to desert for the blackish water.

"Let 'em fight it out," said the ranger chief: "then we'll cross the river."

But the next instant a cry pealed from Artena's lips, and her slender hand pointed forward.

"See!" she cried. "Cohoon is on the bridge! He not dead after all. See! see!"

"By my heart! she's right," exclaimed McKay, "and the other Indian is—"

"New York Harry! My gal is not far off either. By Heaven! Cohoon shan't kill him; he's for *me*!"

And drawing a pistol, he took as steady aim as the flickering light of the torch would allow, and fired. The traitor reeled, and being released from the encircling arms of his astonished adversary, fell forward on his face on the rocks.

"Cohoon!" said Kit, advancing toward the Indian. "Gods, we weren't looking for you. Where's 'Reesa?"

"There," and he pointed to where the insensible form of the girl had been dropped by the abductor to grapple with his unseen foe.

A moment later she was in her father's arms.

"Away!" cried Cohoon; "the Modocs rush up the river. The noise of the pistol has reached their ears."

Artena pointed to a corridor that tended to the left, into which she led the way, and was followed by the entire party.

CHAPTER XVI.

SETTLING ACCOUNTS.

THE savages gained rapidly upon our friends, and near the mouth of the corridor they were brought to bay.

"I see we've got to fight the demons," said Kit South, dropping the traitor, whom he had carried from the scene of his final defeat. "I hear my boys outside, and I will cry them to us."

Then he sprung to the opening, just large enough to admit of the egress of a single body, and a peculiar cry pealed from his throat.

The call was answered, and as he turned to battle with the Modocs, he saw his companions pour a volley into their ranks.

The shots staggered the red-men, and they quickly sprung to shelter.

"Now," said McKay, in a low tone, as he extinguished his torch, "now for freedom. Quick!"

Evan Harris was the first to crawl into the bright starlight, and 'Reesa was pushed up to him, and Lava-Bed Kit brought up the rear, dragging his old enemy after him.

"Leave the carcass in the hole," said the half-breed. "What do you want with a dead man?"

"D'ye s'pose I'd take a corpse about?" returned the scout, with an air of injured innocence. "This fellow isn't dead, and I've got several old scores to settle with 'im. But—Jehu!"

The scout staggered back as a flame darted from the darkness of the corridor, and a score of bullets cut the air about his face.

But fortunately no one was injured, and the next moment the fugitives returned the fire, and started forward.

Cohoon cocked his carbine and flung it to his shoulder, but Kit covered the lock with his brawny hand.

"Boy, don't you know the red chaps?" he said, looking into the Indian's face with a curious smile, and Cohoon dropped the gun as he recognized the leader of the party.

The new-comers comprised a detachment of McKay's Warm Spring Indians, and at last the hunted ones were safe.

The Modocs dared not follow above the lava caves, and it was with great difficulty that the half-breed could prevent his scouts from rushing into the corridor, and punishing Jack while he was so near.

"Now, 'Reesa, they'll never get you into their clutches again," said Kit South, turning to his daughter, who walked beside her lover. "You've lost one home, but you will gain another. I can soon hew a good one from the trees; but I can't—"

"No, father, you can't replace mother."

Kit was silent, and with gritted teeth he commanded the party to halt, and confronted Rafe Todd.

The deserter was not even severely wounded. Cohoon's bullet had failed to penetrate a vital spot, and he was walking beside the Indian.

"We're on safe ground now," said the scout to McKay, "and there's one man in this party who is not going into camp."

Then every eye fell upon the painted traitor.

"Rafe Todd, you know who that one man is," he continued, looking the doomed man steadily in the eye. "Here you pay the penalty attached to crime. Were we to take you into camp, Davis would send you to Fort Crook, and you would be hung in the presence of your old comrades. Therefore, I s'pose you would rather meet the bullet here."

"That I would, Kit South," was the reply, in a tone fearfully calm. "I would sooner burn over a slow fire, than hang before the boys."

"You shall have fair play, Rafe. Cut him loose, Cohoon."

The Indian obeyed, and once again Rafe Todd was free.

"It will never be said of Kit South that he shot a white man in cold blood; therefore, we put ten paces between us, and fight a fair duel. If you slay me, all well and good. I'll molest you no more. But first tell me how you came to play the New York Harry? 'Reesa says she saw you thrown into the river for dead."

The traitor smiled, and glanced at the scout's daughter.

"The man shot by McKay while bending over you and

Cohoon asleep in Jack's cave was Harry," said Rafe, addressing Kit. "I was to spy in the camp that night, so I exchanged garments with the chief, and hired him to strike you while you slept. I scarred my face in exact imitation of Harry's, and the deception deceived you. Harry fell as you know; now he sleeps in the river, and when I discovered that Jack believed me dead, I assumed the entire *role* of his chief."

For a moment silence followed the unraveling of two mysteries, and Kit looked at the traitor again.

"Are you ready now?" he asked, quietly.

"Quite ready."

Then Cohoon, acting as the deserter's second, led him from the group, which dispersed, and left the lava-bed ranger standing alone.

The men being placed, a pistol was put into the hand of the deserter, and the word was given. The reports of the two pistols blended harmoniously together, and the traitor dropped on his knees then fell forward on his face—*dead!*

"The old score is settled at last," said Kit South, lifting the heavy head and beholding the bullet hole in the brow. "Rafe Todd, you sent the red devils to my home. I sent you to the lake of torture. Yes, the score is settled, forever, now. I can tell Gillem, now, that my dream has come true."

When the twain rejoined the anxious party, the scalp of Rafe Todd the deserter, which at Fort Crook was worth two hundred and fifty dollars, hung at Cohoon's belt!

Daylight was breaking when the party resumed their journey, and all at once the sound of a heavy gun fell upon their ears. Several seconds later a hissing noise told them that the mortars had opened on the Modocs' new stronghold, and then they quickened their steps.

The camp was reached in safety, and 'Reesa South felt that she was free once more.

"I'd like to know," said Kit South, addressing McKay who stood beside the Generals, watching the effect of the shells, "yes, I'd like to know what that young Indian was going to tell Jack that night when Cohoon and I was lying

to him about Arrow-Head. You know I jerked him up and killed him."

"He was the Indian who shot me with an arrow when I started after you Klamaths," answered McKay, with a smile. "No doubt he saw you and Cohoon 'fixing up' by the river, and was following you when he ran against me. I recognized him directly after you had killed him."

"And so he war going to tell Jack that Cohoon and old Kit war jest playing Klamath," said the scout. "Well, that would have made a pretty mess; but I reckon he'll never get to open his news bag."

"I should think not," added McKay.

The last page of our Far West romance has been reached.

'Reesa South remained in the Union camp until the close of the Modoc war, in which, to its finale, her father, lover, Cohoon and Artena, continued to do valiant service. The scouting trio assisted in the capture of Captain Jack, who was surprised to learn that Artena was really Gillem's spy, and he regretted that he had not taken her life when opportunity offered it to the sacrifice of his knife.

Already Cohoon, openly calling Artena his wife, has left the army, and intends passing the remainder of his life among the Lost River settlements.

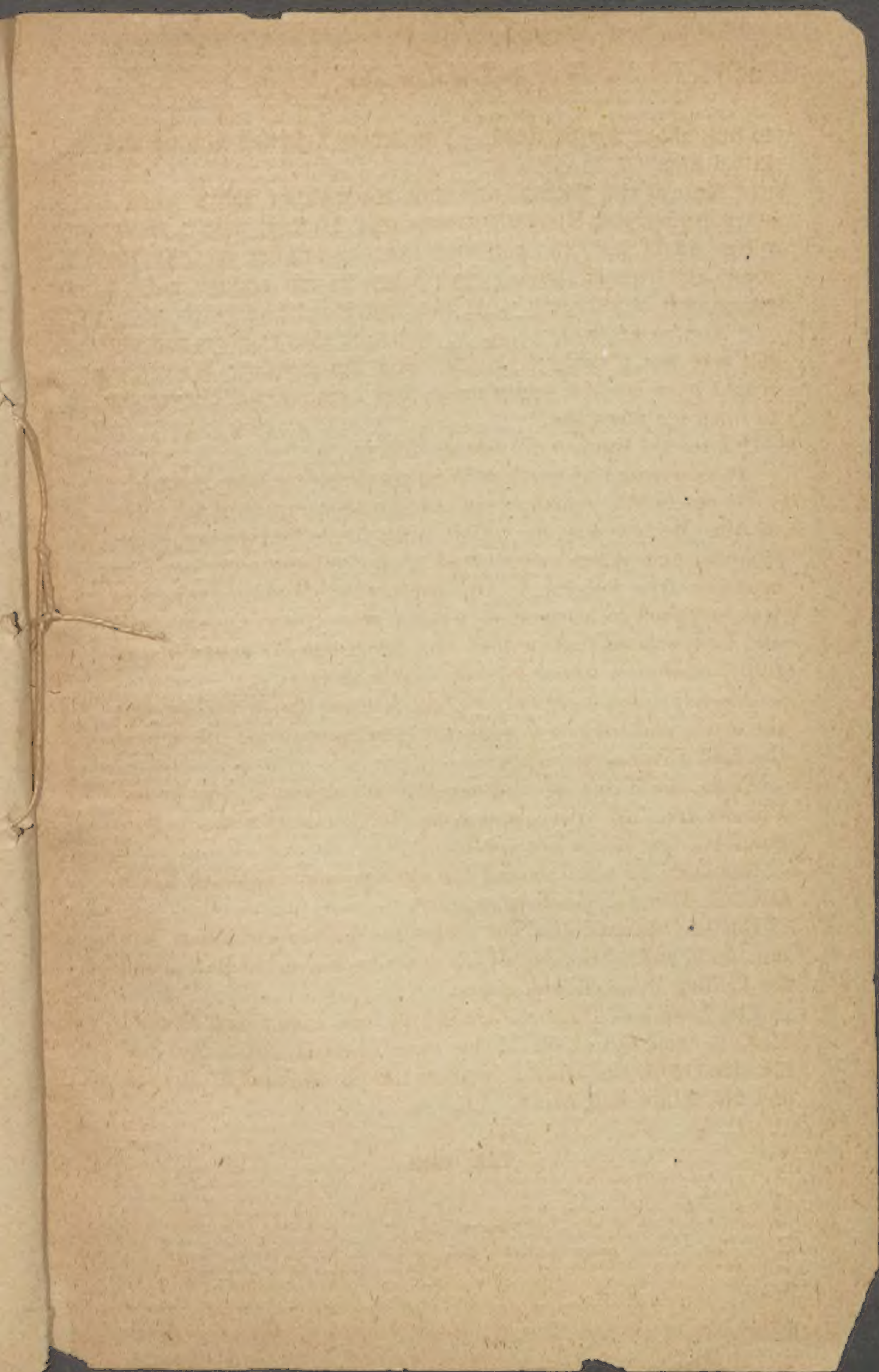
From the ruins of the Oregonian's cabin, a new house, Phoenix like, has arisen, and Evan Harris claims a share of its comforts, for 'Reesa is his wife.

Certainly he has deserved the maiden, and Lava-Bed Kit is satisfied with his daughter's choice.

But the old man can not forget his failure to kidnap Captain Jack, and to the day of his death he will curse Rafe Todd for baffling his well-laid plans.

The Lava-bed Rangers, headed by our giant hero, Donald McKay, came out of the Modoc war covered with glory, and remained with the army to witness the punishment of Mouseh and his fellow-murderers.

THE END.



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